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METROPOLITAN
SPECIAL COLLECTION

PUBLICITY THE TRUE CURE OF SOCIAL EVILS.

LIVERPOOL LIFE:

ITS

PLEASURES, PRACTICES, AND PASTIMES.

"'Tis strange, but true; for truth is always strange,
Stranger than fiction."

C 774

Reprinted from "The Liverpool Mercury."



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EGERTON SMITH & CO., MERCURY OFFICE, LORD STREET.

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CONTENTS

DEDICATED

TO THE

Mayor, Magistrates, Aldermen, Councillors,

CLERGY, MINISTERS, AND TEACHERS

OF THE

BOROUGH OF LIVERPOOL.

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P R E F A C E.

THE many cheering expressions of sympathy and approval which our revelations of the darker side of Liverpool Life have called forth, from clergymen and other friends of religion and public morality, might well enable us to endure with composure misrepresentation of our motives, and misconstruction of our objects, on the part of the ignorant, the frivolous, and the interested. When we undertook the arduous and repulsive task of disclosing to our fellow-townsmen the moral evils which reign and riot unchecked, because unknown, among large classes of our population, we never anticipated that it would be practicable to discharge it efficiently without giving publicity to much that we would gladly have withheld from the eyes of our readers. But we felt that to shrink from the inevitable conditions of our enterprise would be fatal to every practical aim which we had in view; we had confidence in the candour and sound judgment of those for whom we write; and we have the satisfaction of finding that our labours are deemed, by persons whose opinion we especially value, to be as excellent in tendency and effect as we know them to be in design and intention.

Nevertheless, we have no wish to dispose thus summarily of objections which, though far outweighed by many strong testimonies of approval, are entitled to respectful notice wherever they are sincerely entertained. Although ignorance, frivolity, and self-interest may have been foremost and loudest in detecting impropriety in the confessedly offensive disclosures contained in some of the papers referred to, we cannot doubt that in some instances such objections are honestly felt by thoughtful minds; and we consider it due both to ourselves and the great cause to which we are devoted, to meet them distinctly.

The truth is, the question of the relative advantages and disadvantages of giving publicity to certain forms of social and moral evil is one on which men's opinions will probably always differ. Both the advantages and the disadvantages are real; and, however decisively the former may preponderate, some minds will naturally be more especially impressed by the latter. The mischief incidentally arising from revelations of moral turpitude, though infinitely less considerable and permanent than the good, is sometimes more obvious at a first glance, and more immediate. For instance—to take a recent very striking case—it is certain that the publication of the circumstances of Palmer's crime acted most perniciously on the mind of Dove. Dove's wife might not improbably have been living at this moment had the newspapers been absolutely silent on all the particulars of the Rugeley poisonings. It is perfectly possible, also, that the publication of Dove's confession may in its turn supply guilty suggestions and impulses to minds like his own, already predisposed to crime. Again and again have the newspaper reports of police investigations and criminal trials aroused a morbid imitativeness, and called forth a succession of servile copyists. Nothing would be easier than to construct, with such *data*, a plausible argument for suppressing all public records of crime, and conducting all judicial proceedings in secret. Yet most Englishmen will most instinctively feel that such a remedy—and we really see no other—would be ten thousand times worse than the disease, and that the social and moral good which we derive from the universal and instant publicity which is the life of our institutions, incalculably outweighs its occasional and incidental evils.

In fact, whenever the attempt is made, through some caprice of journalism, to deprive the public of morally repulsive facts which it is interested in knowing, we at once see that it is a mistake. Two or three weeks ago, a metropolitan newspaper, with extraordinary pretensions to purity, claimed great credit for refusing to report a disgusting police case. Had its contemporaries taken the same view of their moral responsibilities, the consequence would have been that, while delicate minds would have been spared a painful shock, parents would have lost a much-needed warning of the necessity of guarding their children from the outrages of miscreants, and the example made of an offender would have had no deterrent effect on other evil-doers. Of course there is a point at which the details of

crime become simply loathsome, and publicity would be an unmixed evil. But it may safely be laid down as a general rule, that nothing is "unfit for publication" when publication is necessary to guarantee the due administration of justice, to deter offenders, or to put imperilled innocence on its guard.

Let us apply these principles to our revelations of Liverpool Life. Undoubtedly we have assumed the responsibility of laying before the world facts which it would be undesirable to publish were there no adequate practical end to be answered by publicity. But there was, and is, an adequate end to be attained, and one which we could never hope to attain except by publicity. How are parents and employers of labour to combat the moral perils which assail those under their care or influence, unless they know what those perils are? The question simply is, Is it desirable or undesirable that Liverpool should know, in order that it may condemn and root out, the moral foulness which infects certain quarters of this town and certain classes of its population? Are such evils as those which we have felt it our duty to expose likely to be increased by exposure? The question is one which answers itself. Nay, it has already been answered by facts. One of the dens of vice and iniquity described in these chapters has been closed since we revealed and denounced its horrors. If any one can inform us of any feasible mode, short of publicity, by which such a result might have been achieved, we shall be only too thankful to accept a suggestion which will relieve us from the necessity of proceeding further with a painful task. Our own conviction is, that had we even spoken less plainly than we have done—had we sought refuge from revolting details in inoffensive generalities—we might as well have held our peace.

It may be different in a country ruled by the arbitrary will of a monarch or a beaureaucracy. Where the people do not govern, little may be lost by leaving them in ignorance of evils which it rests with official authority to cure. But in a free and self-governed community, where legislation does but embody opinion, and where even legal authority is virtually powerless without the support of opinion, it is the first condition of all reforms, moral and social, as well as political, that opinion should be enlightened by a perfect knowledge of facts, however repulsive those facts may be. Where would the cause of sanitary improvement have been at this moment if its earlier promoters had shrunk from broadly placing before the world

offensive details, which, but for the practical object in view, would have been too sickening for publication? Where would have been our model lodging-houses if the authors of the movement for improving the dwellings of the poor had hesitated to unveil foul and hideous facts, from the contemplation of which every pure mind recoils in disgust? It would have been as hopeless to remedy the moral and physical evils against which our sanitary reformers wage war, if truth had been suppressed in deference to a spurious propriety, as it would have been to save the remnant of our army in the dreadful Crimean winter, if journalism had not unsparingly proclaimed facts which, in a military and political sense, were assuredly "unfit for publication." It is undeniable that, in more ways than one, real mischief was done by the publicity given by the press to the sufferings of our troops; but that publicity was the first and all-essential condition of the preservation of an English army in the East.

In short, we cannot have the good of any system, institution, or social arrangement without the evil. The advantages and disadvantages of publicity inevitably go together. The English people cannot and will not forego the former, and they must therefore be willing to endure the latter. Publicity is the life and soul of all our institutions, the primary condition of all our reforms, the support and incentive of all our philanthropies. The informed and awakened opinion of Liverpool is the only power that can purify and regenerate Liverpool life, as the aroused feeling of the nation is the only power that can redress national abuses. To that opinion we have appealed, and shall continue to appeal, by placing before it the facts which we conscientiously believe essential to its guidance. We have the satisfaction of knowing that our appeal has not been, and cannot be, in vain; and we can contentedly submit to any partial or momentary misconstruction which, in the interests of public morality, we may find ourselves compelled to encounter.

November, 1856.

LIVERPOOL LIFE.

"'Tis strange, but true ; for truth is always strange,
Stranger than fiction."

CHAPTER I.

THE subject of rational recreation for the working classes is at the present time exciting great attention in the public mind. It is a question in which all are interested, but comparatively few act as if they felt that they were interested. Laudable efforts have now and then been made to promote the welfare and cheer the life of the toiling millions ; but not being founded on a correct basis, and not being supported with sufficient zeal, they have in most instances proved abortive. In some cases the aim has not been properly directed ; in others, the means employed have proved ineffectual to accomplish the end desired. An improvement of manners has been attempted, without duly considering the man to be improved. Hence, so far as Liverpool is concerned, *with one exception*, there is no institution which has continued to carry out with any degree of success a truly systematic and earnest endeavour to supply pleasing, popular, and rational recreation for the working population.

It is now generally admitted that man, more especially the labouring man, must have amusement. This may be of a social, moral, or intellectual character ; but be it what it may, amusement he must have. If the authorities or public institutions will not supply this, individuals whose selfishness overrules their morality will. If the cheap concert, popular entertainment, and instructive lecture be not provided, the free singing-room, the casino, the dog-fight, the badger-bait, and the rat-killing and boxing match are. Few are the places that offer to the masses rational recreation or innocent mirth free from the temptations which corrupt and the allurements which destroy ; but there are hundreds of places that offer amusements so called, surrounded by abominations at which the heart sickens. If improvement be sought, the present condition must be seen. To see what the

morals and manners of the people now are, as exhibited in their amusements, may suggest what they should be. That vice and immorality abound, the records of our criminal courts abundantly show. The object of these papers is not only to make this more apparent, but to reveal to those who have little conception of the reality, the character of the haunts in which this vice is propagated and diffused. The task is a laborious and unpleasant one; nay, in some respects it is a dangerous one; but it must be done, if we would begin aright to improve the moral, social, and intellectual condition of the people. Ministers of religion, philanthropists, legislators, national and local, men of the world, parents, if you wish to see some of the amusements provided for the people, and the abominations which surround them, accompany us in our rambles through Liverpool, and learn what the darkest phase of Liverpool Life really is—its pleasures, practices, and pastimes.

The Saturday Evening Concerts, established in 1844, to provide, at a cheap cost, rational recreation for the people, is the one exception alluded to above. This institution has been eminently prosperous, and its success was never greater than in this the twelfth year of its existence. Let us, then, first visit the Concert Hall, Lord Nelson-street. The entertainment announced is Mr. Basil Young's "Peep at Life." Taking a seat in the body of the hall, the admission to which is threepence, we can observe the character and bearing of the audience. They are in the main of the operative class—the youth from the forge or foundry, with the white moleskins and the navy cap; the young ship-carpenter, who delights in the "red, white, and blue;" the sailmaker, so redolent of tar; and the plasterer, smelling "loudly" of lime, are there with clean faces, comfortably clothed, smiling on their companions, robust, and ready to enjoy themselves. Fathers and mothers with young children and grown-up sons and daughters, the old and middle aged, are there—in short, the room is crammed, and the behaviour excellent. The reserved seats and side galleries are frequented by what is by common consent or courtesy called "the middle class"—people who know where to get a good article, and like it none the less if it be cheap. Mr. Young's entertainment is really what it professes to be, "A Peep at Life" in every phase, from the humble bill-sticker or wretched ballad-singer to the drawing-room dandy or the exquisite of the evening party. The humour of the entertainer is rich and varied; his jokes, if not positively new, are rich and piquant; his conundrums are not bad; and his singing is of a character to commend itself to the most fastidious. His keen and cutting satires on the follies of evening parties, and his exhibition of the foolishness of

many who frequent them, were highly relished by the audience. His points were quickly seen, and as heartily applauded; and there was not throughout the entertainment either word, action, or expression that did not "point a moral or adorn a tale." The two hours in the Concert Hall were well and profitably spent and nothing gave a better indication of the effects on the people of an evening so devoted than the orderly manner in which the crowded audience dispersed.

It was now about ten o'clock. We walked down Lord Nelson-street, passed the railway station, and whilst contemplating that magnificent monument of the wealth and taste of Liverpool, St. George's Hall, our attention was attracted by the glare of lamps and the buzz and bawling which issued from the space of ground at the corner of Roe-street and Lime-street. Crossing over, we found that this plot of land, which we have since been told belongs, or did belong, to a very pious member of the corporation, had recently been enclosed by a brick wall, and was now covered with stalls of all sorts. The buzz proceeded from the bystanders, a motley crowd—the bawling from the proprietors of the respective establishments recommending their various games, wares, and edibles. The visitor enters by a sort of gateway into a large dirty yard of oblong shape. The stalls are arranged on each side, leaving a wide space in the centre, which is filled by persons of all ages and of every shade of character. There is here the blear-eyed old debauchee, smelling strongly of the fumes of "last night's spree." He had just dropped in to see life on his way to the pothouse, where in less than an hour he will take the chair, swear that his companions are all "jolly good fellows," and induce them harmoniously to declare that they will not "go home" till "daylight does appear." There is here, also, the young man just entering upon life. What a *débüt*! A few hours ago he left his work, cleaned himself, told his mother he was just going for "a walk with Bill," and now he is here smoking a cigar (his companion has a short pipe), swearing a little, and talking a good deal. There are also numbers of filthy-looking young men, and many vulgar-looking and young girls; boys of all ages and all degrees of wretchedness—some taking part in the sports, and others looking earnestly on, wishing they also had the means to partake.

The scene was one not to be forgotten. The flare and fume of naphtha lamps; wheels of fortune presided over by vile-looking and dirty-spoken men; a portable "American bowling alley," at which two stout and stupid-looking women invited us to try our luck; the "Royal Shooting Gallery," the target of which is composed of the portraits of the Queen, Prince Albert, the Emperor Napoleon, and

the Duke of Wellington, and for the low charge of one halfpenny we had the chance of improving our position and practising our loyalty, shooting our Queen and pocketing the nuts. The grinding of a wheel at the American ice stall never ceased; and the horrible oaths of the ragged wretches that were feasting on the dainties caused one to shudder. The bawling of men and women with the "red, white, and blue," to tell the crowd how many "are down," and the bustle and excitement of "all down," to see what will "turn up," rendered the scene a perfect Babel, intensified, if possible, in viciousness. Around the stall dignified as the "Royal London Lottery," a vast crowd was congregated. The proprietor had a stock of phrases which he was continually using. "Now, gentlemen, make your game;" "Faint heart never won fair lady;" "Nothing venture nothing have;" "Speculate and win;" "The chances is great, the risk small." Tempted by these expressions, the sight of the showy articles before him, and the excitement of the crowd, the incipient gambler ventures his halfpenny, and thus enters on a course—whither it may lead, who knows?

We walked all round the stalls. Those doing the smallest amount of trade offered, if we could believe the proprietors, the greatest advantages. One man, surrounded by mangy-looking Eccles cakes, persisted in calling out, "*All* can play here;" yet no one did play with him whilst we remained. Next to him stood a tall girl, who, to judge from her appearance, had a strong antipathy to hydropathy, or clean water in any form. She kept screaming out, "Now, my lads, down with your money—forty can play as well as one, and one as well as forty." Her desires being more moderate than those of her neighbour, they were gratified, for there must have been forty at her table, whilst the Milesian who wanted *all* did not get any. What a lesson in life, but what a school in which to learn it!

There is one stall devoted entirely to gambling for money. There is no inducement to speculation by fancy, ornamental, or useful articles, China shepherds, or Eccles cakes and nuts. "All business is done here in hard cash, and you can carry away in your pocket all you win." So we are told by the woman who presides. The stakes, whatever they may be, are even on the red, double on the white, and treble on the blue. A boy, looking like a shop lad who has received his weekly wages and ought to have taken them to his mother, risks a penny on the blue, spins round the pointer, and it stops at the blue. He wins threepence. By his good luck others are encouraged and led on. Two or three respectable-looking youths are intensely in earnest, the muscles of the face exhibiting alternations between hope and fear, and their whole frame ner-

vously excited. They keep the coppers in their hands, and throw them down or pick them up with a seriousness sad to look upon. The woman is not so fortunate just now, and her temper is giving way in consequence. A poor little girl with tattered garments, long matted hair, and beautiful blue eyes, in her anxiety to see the progress of the game, creeps in behind the stall. She is immediately observed by the stallkeeper, who raises her fat, dirty hand to strike the intruder, it may be imagined in what gentle terms, "Go to —— out of this. I had as soon see the devil as see a girl about. I am sure to have bad luck if there is a girl near." The blue-eyed creature avoided the blow, mixed with the crowd, and we lost sight of her.

The lifting and striking machines are great features here, and it is surprising to see the amount of money young men spend in obtaining a knowledge of what weight they can lift or how hard they can hit. We noticed one young man, who within half an hour had operated on the striking machine six times, bringing with him on each occasion friends "to see how it's done," in order that his vanity might be flattered by their approval. A sailor, somewhat intoxicated, tries at the machine; but his blows are not very effective, so he turns to lifting, and he is at that quite at home, rewarding his own success by several "goes" as he terms them.

Our attention was next directed to a van close to the gate. The proprietors were busily engaged in the excitement of a Dutch auction. A small monkey, cold and consumptive-looking, was chained to the pole in front, amusing itself and the bystanders as best as it could, by climbing up amongst saws, planes, chisels, cutlery, hardware, china ornaments, and musical instruments. The occupants of this fancy repository were two men—one a native of Yorkshire, the other an Irishman,—and a young lady. The men addressed the crowd alternately; the young damsel, dirty enough, handed out the wares. "Here you are," said the Yorkshireman, who was voluble, and gesticulated vilely, holding up a pair of braces, "let your eyes be your judge, your pockets your protector; these are articles that I sold twenty gross of in Manchester, and what I intend to sell largely here. If you go to any shop in town they will charge you three and sixpence for an inferior quality; and to think I don't even say a shilling, or ninepence, but only sixpence, for these patent india-rubber braces, ought to convince you of the principle on which we conduct our business." Then holding up a sprigbit, or something of that appearance, he said, "A tool chest in itself; as necessary and useful in erecting a gatepost as in constructing a pigstye. If this will not suit, I don't know what will; and if the

price will not do, don't take it, and I will return you the money. I will not say four shillings and sixpence, nor will I say three shillings and sixpence, nor shall I say two shillings and sixpence, although worth double the sum. I will not even say one shilling and sixpence, but I will say one shilling and threepence, going at that. Rather than you should lose this opportunity, or me the sale, I will now say one shilling. There it is ; it is only for you to speak the word, pay the money, and pocket the tool chest." No one did speak : the tool chest was put back, and an attempt made to dispose of some other equally cheap and valuable article. Just at this moment, the door of a stable, or a building something like one, opened close to where we stood, and three or four low-looking, half-drunken young men were thrust out. Roars of laughter and shouts of applause had previously been heard proceeding from that direction, and when the door was open it could plainly be seen that the place was filled with people. We could see no mode of ingress, but on inquiry were directed "just round the corner." We proceeded as pointed out, and entered the establishment of a medical galvanist. A small bill was placed in our hands, and from it we learned that "to the lovers of rational mirth this place is open nightly for a scientific and instructive entertainment, embracing Sir H. Davy's nitrous oxide, or laughing gas, and other instructive, amusing, and laughable experiments." What we there observed must be the subject of our next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

THE establishment for the manufacture of galvanic apparatus and the enjoyment of rational mirth was a low dirty-looking building. Over the door were a transparency and a bill on which appeared a clown's head with "a broad grin" on the features, and the words, "lots of fun every evening." At the door there were some galvanic batteries and other apparatus, with the view of exciting the curiosity of the on-lookers. A young man addressed the crowd, inviting them to come in and witness the interesting and scientific experiments "for the low charge of one penny." Crowds of persons, chiefly young men, were pouring in, and we resolved to enter. We paid the penny to a red-faced, broad set, slovenly-dressed woman, who looked "juicy," and smelled strongly of the extract of juniper. It must have cost a considerable sum to paint this lady's face, so brilliant was it in colour ; and there was little doubt that, whatever the colouring material used, the application had been made inter-

nally. She was evidently not without the milk of human kindness in her composition, for, although she prayed to the Almighty that she might get hold of the hair of her "—— husband's head," she in the intervals of money-taking lavished her delicate attentions on a dirty poodle dog which sat in her lap. On pushing aside a curtain we found ourselves in a square barn-like building, lighted by a gas pendant from the roof, for there was no ceiling. There was a form about four feet long at one side of the apartment, and this was the only seat-room provided. From a beam there were suspended two galvanic wires, and under them was placed a box for persons to stand upon who wished to receive a shock. In a corner of the room was a table supporting oranges, Eccles cakes, and a wheel of fortune, which were watched over by a very young girl. In a prominent position, in large characters, was placed the notice, "Take care of your pockets,"—a caution which, judging from the appearance of the company, was not unnecessary. There were about fifty persons present when we entered, and the number was being steadily increased by new comers.

Strange as it may seem, up to this hour we had not the least idea that science or the love of it had taken such deep root and was bearing such fruit amongst the masses. We had read that in the United States of America there is an astronomical society that numbers amongst its members thirty-nine grocers, sixteen hog dealers, twenty-five joiners and carpenters, and but five ministers; and we knew also that in our own town there existed several societies for scientific purposes; but we were not prepared for the fact that three or four hundred persons of the lowest grade of society could be brought together on a Saturday evening to witness scientific experiments. The persons, however, were actually before us, and were anxiously waiting for the display.

In the absence of any person to direct the studies or conduct the scientific experiments, girls, boys, and men experimented on themselves. The contortion of their features and limbs was very painful to look upon. Their conduct was disgustingly vulgar; their language shamefully indecent and obscene. The batteries being very strongly charged, at times the experimenters were twisted about, and on several occasions they were knocked with such violence against the gas as to endanger the pipe. The rosy-faced money-taker noticed this, and remonstrated with the company in such gentle and elegant phrases as these:—"—— your eyes, do you see what you're doing? You'll break the gas directly." "Now, do you hear! I'll turn it off directly, blast me if I don't." "If you don't mind what you're after, —— the bit more shall you have

to-night." To one boy, who was inclined for more mirth than the place could afford, the lady said, "Now, I'll stand none of your — nonsense, and if you don't drop it, I'll put you out into the street by the *scruff of the neck*." This threat not having the desired effect, the decorous personage, with a wrathful expression, exclaimed, "Now, I *will* turn it off; — if I don't, you — set of fools." She was true to her word, and disconnected the wires accordingly. With such an introduction to the lecture, what could be expected from the lecture itself?

We were not long in discovering that the interesting and instructive part of the exhibition was carried on in a room or shed adjoining that in which the crowd assembled. This shed, which was capable of holding about one hundred persons, was filled. Boisterous laughter and shouts of applause were heard from time to time, and these served to increase the anxiety of those who were impatiently waiting for an introduction to the *sanctum sanctorum*. One gentleman, a member of the musical profession, carried in his arms a child about six years old. He said, apologetically, "I wish my daughter to know everything, and for this purpose he placed her on an old stove in the corner near the door. From her elevated position the child could see the coarse behaviour of the men and boys who beguiled their waiting moments by experimenting with the galvanic wires; she could hear the fiendish and frightful oaths of these devotees of science; and she could witness her father laughing at the obscene jest or the filthy retort of youths and men deeply sunk in depravity. Poor child! in years to come she will, doubtless, think of what she saw and heard, and remember also the expression of her father, that he wished her to see everything. On the form was seated a mother suckling her infant; next to her sat a voluptuous-looking young woman of easy virtue. They had both been indulging at the shrine of Bacchus, and were in that yawning, sottish state well known by tipplers as "moreish." After every yawn, the young woman exclaimed, "I wish to God it was over."

As we were contemplating the scene before us, the proprietor of the establishment came from the inner apartment. He carried with him a filthy-looking bladder, to which a tube and mouthpiece were attached. Upon inquiring how long we should have to wait before we were introduced to the "rational mirth," he replied, "In a few minutes; I'm going to give it to the last one now." He returned into the room with a well-filled bladder of gas, and we soon heard more laughing, singing, shouting and swearing. After the lapse of a few minutes the door of the *sanctum* was opened; there was a great crush towards it, and at last we found ourselves

in the next room. The apartment was a mere wooden shed, the filth of the ground being heaped up at the ends to form a sort of gallery. The atmosphere was very foul, and in this abominable, dirty hole, at least one hundred persons were crammed. The notice "Take care of your pockets" was here, too—suspended from the roof! There were crowded together boys of all ages, and in all stages of depravity and filth; young men from seventeen to twenty-five years of age, in various states of intoxication; old men, who seemed to like the fun; and girls, young women, and mothers. The young men appeared to consist principally of carters, porters, sail-makers, and ship-carpenters, and their language and behaviour were filthy in the extreme. Regardless of the presence of women and girls, one fellow conducted himself in a manner which led us to regret that Newland's patent sentry boxes had not been introduced into such dens.

The bulk of the audience took their stand on the raised positions. A strong rope ran along the outer side wall, and by means of a belt round the body, and a ring, the patients were tethered to the rope. We asked the proprietor the reason for such an arrangement. His reply was suggestive. "The people that come here, whenever they take the gas, begin to fight, and we do this to secure them and ourselves, from injury." The proprietor being completely "done up" with his previous exertions, his assistant came forward to conduct "the instructive and scientific" experiments. The assistant proved to be an abominably filthy fellow. The crowd had rendered themselves almost hoarse with cursing each other's eyes and sanguinary faces; polluting the already poison-laden atmosphere with their horrid imprecations; and he, instead of lecturing upon science, cursed the various features of the human face divine in a frightful manner, threatening to turn some of the scientific disciples out of the place, and to throw others into a region never mentioned to cars polite. He concluded by declaring that unless "Yees stand back, and keep order," no distribution of gas should be made. A young fellow having at last been properly secured, he took off his coat and cap, and the experiments began. The operator held the nostrils of the patient whilst he was inhaling the oxide. For a moment or two the youth appeared to be stupified, and shut his eyes. In a second or two after he stared wildly around him, and then with set teeth and clenched fists he struck out, and kicked with maniacal fury. His intellectual development was extremely low; his moral region equally so; his temperament bilious; and during the excitement his face became thoroughly animalised, so to speak. "If I had you at the Tranmere wakes," shouted he,

"I would kick the —— soul out of you." He tugged at the rope, and tried to free himself; he swore at the audience, and yelled fiendishly. There was neither mirth nor method in this madness. It was a terrible spectacle for men to witness; and what must it have been to the poor children by whom this wretch was surrounded? Having become somewhat exhausted by his efforts, he sung a song disgustingly obscene. No attempt was made by the assistant to stop the singing; the song was listened to with very little interruption, and there was no disapprobation shown. A few of the audience were too young to understand the filthy allusions; but there was a wicked silence, a sly smile, and a secret satisfaction manifested by a majority of the scoundrels present that quite startled us. Some of the women even appeared to have an affection for the indelicacies which were introduced. The stimulating qualities of the gas having died out, the young "rough" was let loose.

Just at this moment there was presented a scene which no pen can describe. A nest of young devils appeared to have been unhived, and were savagely fighting for the nectaressential to infernal life. "—— your —— eyes, did you not promise it to me?" shouted one. "Hold your —— tongue," cried another. The divine name was associated with almost every volley of oaths—each horrid imprecation. Desperate were the struggles of the incarnate fiends to get possession of the dirty bladder which contained the intoxicating gas. "Do you take me for a —— fool, or a —— idiot?" shouted out the assistant; and with a terrible oath he threatened to "knock their —— heads off." One stronger than the rest succeeded in getting hold of the pipe attached to the bladder, and to him the privilege of being fastened to the stake was granted. He inhaled the gas, and before the assistant had withdrawn the bladder, he struck out with desperate force. Foiled in his aim, stamping, swearing, and slaking his tongue, he would have been no bad model of a chained demon. Although it was apparent that he was fighting earnestly to free himself, yet, as an innocent-looking boy remarked, he was "swearing for fun."

And he, repulsed, fell into a sadness; thence into a weakness;
Thence to a lightness; and by this declension
Into the madness wherein now he raves.

During this dreadful exhibition of depravity, some of the spectators, not yet sufficiently familiarised with this form of vice, became terrified with the devilish incarnation, and expressed uneasiness and anxiety to escape from the den. One boy was so much

overcome that he had to be taken away from the front, and the money-taker kindly and considerately allowed him an opportunity of witnessing the concluding scenes of this performance at a distance from the stake. To the great majority of those present this spectacle was evidently nothing new. We learned from their conversations that "Tom," "Bill," "Jack," and "Harry," all acquaintances of theirs, had on many occasions partaken of this life-giving oxide, and while under its influence had played such fantastic tricks before high heaven as would make the angels weep. The intimacy between many of the young fiends and the proprietor and his worthy assistant was remarkable; but, of course, it must be borne in mind that this was a display of "scientific and instructive" experiments, and it was only to be expected that the lecturer and his pupils should be on the best of terms. It might be that some persons present had been misled by the announcement on the bills and the address at the door, but we regret to think that such were the exceptions—regular frequenters the rule. Most of the persons present knew, or had been informed by their companions, of the scenes which awaited them. The anxiety of so many to inhale the gas, even after they had witnessed the vicious display made by some of their associates, was strongly indicative of their love of approbation, and moral depravity. From inquiries since made, we learn that the influence of the gas does not remain on the patient for more than five or ten minutes, at longest; therefore we are led to believe that the inhaling of it was partially used as a cloak, under which these young "roughs" could exhibit their vilest passions. The similarity of the performance of each patient serves to confirm us in this view. The first tethered wretch throws himself into a fighting attitude, spars, kicks, swears, fumes, and concludes by singing—once or twice interrupting the progress of the song to kick and swear more still. Just so does the second. The companions around know the performance so well that they can tell you what song will be sung. What does this indicate? What instruction do these interesting experiments furnish, to those who have the elevation of the people at heart?

When the first effects of the gas appeared to subside, the youth before us began to sing "The Battle of the Alma;" to the sentiment there could be no objection, to the style of singing much. We had seen enough, and retired. In such way had several hundreds of young and old been prepared for the coming Sabbath. Next day we listened to one of our most eloquent divines describing the deep degradation of the poor African, but not a word of the deeper degradation at home. With the previous night's ex-

perience we repeated with heart and soul the words used during the service of the day—

Throughout creation's bounds *let there be light!*

CHAPTER III.

Not far from the temple which is avowedly "devoted to science and art," but is in reality a den of depravity, stands a structure somewhat pretentious in appearance. The front is painted to represent an eastern temple of imposing grandeur, and the bills announce "A Grand Representation of the City of Nineveh," got up by a celebrated artist, "regardless of expense." The figure of a ship performing a see-saw motion on a tempestuous sea suggests moving figures within. A tall, swarthy Italian youth is grinding an organ at the door, and on the solicitation of an elderly, sharp-spoken woman, we pay a penny and enter. On a stage, with the usual accessories of proscenium, side wings, &c., is displayed the city of Nineveh. The scene is evidently taken from or suggested by Martin's celebrated picture, and represents the destruction of the city. The group of figures in the foreground, the magnificent buildings looming in the second distance, and the flames bursting forth with terrific fury in the background, shedding a ruddy glow, an unearthly glare, over the whole scene, are not badly rendered, but the moon in shape and colour is a sad mistake. There are cosmoramic views of Paris, St. Petersburg, Review of Troops, Champ de Mars, the Battle of the Alma, &c. Suspended on the walls are skeletons of birds and portions of others, the snout of a swordfish, a boa constrictor stuffed, and several other rare and curious articles. About twenty persons were present, and, whilst waiting for the gentleman whose business it is to describe the exhibition, they amused themselves by inspecting the curiosities. Wearied at the long delay, we step up to the money-taker, and ask if the gentleman will soon be ready to discharge his obligation to the audience. "I really cannot say (she blandly replied); he ought to be here now, but I have not seen him for the last hour and a half; and as to where he is, or when he will be at his post, I really cannot say." We suggested that her long acquaintance with the subject might enable her to discharge the duties of the absentee; but this she declined; and as we retire from the establishment the lady good-humouredly invites us to "Step in *any time* when you are passing, and *he will be sure to be in.*"

Close by Nineveh is a yard containing two or three caravans

which appear to be performing quarantine, carts of various characters, piles of loose brick, a bookstall, the entrances to two joiners' shops, and a swinging boat! The latter is in construction antique, in decoration and dirt modern. It is rakish-looking, though rusty in parts, is stated to be "new and warranted safe," and is called "The Bloomer." When we entered it was occupied by several damsels, all destitute of bonnets, one of whom was urging the proprietor to increase the speed of the machine by saying, "I will stop in the —— boat all night if you do not give me a good rally." A group of girls, boys, and young men surrounded. Many young lasses, seeing the boat in motion, ran into the yard. Although joyous in their manner, they all use fearful language in addressing each other. Girls of tender years are swearing in their play; the proprietor of the boat is swearing professionally. Boys are pulling at the ropes, which send the boat on gaily. The ladies in the boat, not yet satisfied with the speed, cry out for increased exertion. One modest creature prefaces her request by —— the eyes and limbs of "Billy," a friend for whom she appears to have a special regard, as she threatens to decapitate him immediately on her descent from the car. The next moment she changes her mind, and instead of urging an increase in speed she requests "Billy" to drop it. Billy is only one of the group of rope-pullers, and, however well disposed he may be to "drop it," he cannot control his fellow-labourers, who pull away vigorously. The young lady then, with a loud and lusty voice, which she makes heard far above the din around, screams out, "Hold on, you —— fool; don't you see 'Dirty Mary' coming?" The boat is immediately stopped, and two dirty young women in tatters enter the yard. One of them is "Dirty Mary;" and it is only doing her fair justice to observe that in personal appearance, language, and, so far as we have the opportunity of judging, in disposition, she fully justifies the cognomen. A new crew now gets on board the boat. Dirty Mary and her dirty companion, with several other dirty and ragged girls and two young men, are seated, and away goes "The Bloomer," amidst the laughter of the crowd and the joy of its cargo. When the vessel is fairly under way the young men began to "tittle" the girls, whose drapery is thereby disordered. Nevertheless, their laughter becomes furious. On this subsiding, yells and fearful curses are heard. "By ——, I'll pitch you out," "Go to ——, you dirty-faced cur," and many other less innocent and playful compliments are passed. A coarse song is now commenced by one of the ladies, the disgusting burden or chorus of which is taken up by all hands, and in such trim does the Bloomer sail away with its living freight of guilt and immorality.

We next took refuge in the Anatomical Museum. There were not many persons present, and those who were appeared to be of the operative and labouring class. They seemed to take great interest in the models exhibited, and their behaviour was most excellent. The mottoes suspended above the various specimens are well chosen and expressive. We notice particularly that from Pope—

Vice is a monster of such frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen.

The admission is sixpence. To pay this sum, purchase a catalogue, and spend an hour or two there, will amply repay any person.

On leaving the museum, a large crowd of persons surrounding the huge lamp-post immediately opposite attracted our attention. The assembly was being addressed by a stiff-set man, who made up for a deficiency of oratorical power by an abundant display of earnestness. His head was as round as a bullet, and as bare as a barber's block. He held a small book to his breast with one hand, whilst the other he shook in a threatening manner at his auditory. As he clenched his fist and gnashed his teeth, and stared wildly about him, we doubted at first what was the nature of his office. All anxiety, however on this point, was set at rest when he held forth somewhat in these terms :—"Yes, my dear friends, to talk of life. There is a newspaper, the *Liverpool Mercury*, publishing what they call 'Liverpool Life.' I have read it, and will watch its progress. It tells you of many abominable places, and the life to be enjoyed there; but there is not a word about that other life—the only life that is worth living for—not a word about Jesus Christ. No; that would not do—it would not sell the paper. These newspaper people will describe this, that, and the other, and it would not surprise me if they were to describe itinerant preachers. Such are the bonds in which Satan holds the human mind—such is the depravity of the human heart! Now, I know what Liverpool life is. The day was when I walked abroad with only a portion of a hat on my head, my eye blackened, a tattered coat on my back, a short pipe in my mouth, and a little bulldog at my heels. I ought, therefore, to know what life really is." We secretly thanked the worthy itinerant for his hint, and proceeded on our way to another place of amusement, "the most elegant lounge in Europe."

The building thus designated by its proprietor was formerly devoted to religious purposes; but the congregation that assembled there desiring to be "higher up," or in a more respectable locality, erected for themselves a most beautiful temple, and their old chapel is now devoted to the amusement of the people. We entered this "lounge" about nine o'clock in the evening, and found it almost

full. The pews were filled with devout worshippers at the shrine of sentimental singing, nigger dancing, and gymnastics; in the vestry were persons devoting time and money to bitter beer, porter, and cigars. Lemonade at sixpence per glass had not many devotees. The building is very elegantly decorated: not only is there richness of ornamentation, but in some instances good taste is displayed, attention having been paid to form and colour. The stage drop-scene represents the cavalry charge at Balaclava, and is fairly executed. Around the front of the gallery oval mirrors alternate with oil paintings, and the ceiling is richly ornamented. The charge for admission to the body is threepence, to the gallery and promenade sixpence. The promenade is that part of the building that formerly was the lecture room and library. You could once meet there "the assembled souls of all that men call wise." You can now meet there with sailors, cigars, and bottled porter. At each end of the room are immense mirrors, which give to the apartment the appearance of increased size. There is a bar here, at which you may obtain refreshments. This bar is presided over by young ladies, who conduct their operations with great propriety, and with all that gravity becoming the dignity of their position and the respectability of the establishment. There are a few hair-cushioned seats and a table at the end of the room, but we saw no persons sitting; refreshments were mostly drunk at the bar. A great portion of the promenade being open to front the stage, many are induced to stand here smoking whilst the performance is going on. The persons in the body were of the humbler class; with few exceptions they were sober, and tolerably well behaved. In some instances soap and water had not been superfluously applied to either clothes or persons. The auditors in the gallery were of a better, cleaner, more respectable class. There were very few females present either up stairs or down, and a total absence of vicious-looking or abandoned women. The performances consisted of nigger singing, dancing, and gymnastic feats.

The nigger and his son, a very little boy, were dressed in long leather boots, with tassels, black velvet breeches, white shirts with pink rosettes on the breast; but they had on neither coats, waistcoats nor hats. The father played the banjo, the son the tambourine. The singing and playing gave great satisfaction, and the agility displayed by the little boy with the tambourine was remarkable. The dialogue introduced between the verses of the song was of a senseless character, lacking even the usual spice of "black jokes;" yet the audience was pleased, which was what the performers sought. The dancing was a further display of the nimbleness of the niggers

—young and old—and their efforts called forth a hearty encore. The band then played an overture, after which entered the gymnast, dressed, or rather undressed, after the fashion of the profession. He drew himself up to a ladder which was suspended from the ceiling, in a horizontal position, and performed some wonderful and daring feats. The strength, activity, and daring displayed by the gymnast won the loud applause of the auditors. The monotonous clatter of the niggers' heels, and the painful contortions of the gymnast, offered no inducement for a prolonged stay, or we might have been further impressed with the character of this lounge, and witnessed the wonderful performances of trained dogs and monkeys, and listened to the heart-stirring strains of the celebrated vocalist—all of which were announced in the bills.

We were much struck with the following police notice on the walls:—"Malicious persons throwing money away in this establishment will be taken into custody." In these days of double income tax and dear bread this is cheering, yet comical. To think that persons designated "malicious" will go here, or anywhere, to throw money away, when others can with difficulty get the wherewithal to be content, is surprising. An old moralist—one who appears to be little heeded in these times—says "time is money." Will the proprietor of the lounge allow this reading to be applied to his notice, taking into consideration the unintellectual character of the entertainments he offers to the public?

During a subsequent visit in the body of the lounge we noticed a mechanic, in company with his wife and his little boy, a child about five years of age. The parents had ale before them, and every now and then they handed their glasses to the boy that he might drink. Both father and mother looked stupidly sottish; the child, sickly and restless, urged the mother to "come home." "Come home, mammy;" "Mammy, come home," frequently lisped the childish tongue. At length the mother, staggering from her seat with her boy, made her way towards the door. "Oh, hold my head, mammy, everything is turning round," cried the little fellow. The mother held his head, but she was unsteady, and a younger woman kindly took the child under her charge.

At half-past ten o'clock in the evening, we visited another place of amusement for the people. Having paid threepence for admission, we received a cheque, which entitled us to a glass of ale or porter, a bottle of ginger beer, or a cigar. As we entered, a tall, lank fellow, dressed in a singularly careless and untidy fashion, with a sugar-loaf, dirty white felt hat upon his head, was energetically dilating on the character of an individual whom he designated a

"—— liar and a tarnation swindler," and expressed a determination to "double him up whenever he came within reach." To whom the pronouns related we did not learn, for it was just the close of a character song; the chorus struck up, and the singer took himself off the stage, amid an unsuccessful attempt on the part of a few who stood about the bar to get up a round of applause.

The portion of the audience seated in the gallery consisted chiefly of seafaring men, in company with prostitutes. Some were drinking ale, some porter, others ginger beer; mostly all were smoking; and one syren we observed was also coolly indulging in a Havannah. The carriage of the women in particular was very free, and their positions were very easy. An idle, dirty, dissipated class of men were lounging about in the body of the room. Some stood slouching with their hands plunged to the depths of their breeches pockets; others were leaning over the benches, with their heads buried in their hands, snoring loudly; and some were stretched along the forms, lazily sipping at the ale, gone flat by reason of the scarcity of their means to serve for the length of time they had turned in here to kill. There were a number of women of a very low grade, drinking with men who were lower still. Many of the women had children with them: some were at the breast, and others were sitting sleeping by their sides. At one bench were seated boys and girls, who did not appear to be more than twelve or thirteen years of age. They had ginger beer before them, and two of the youngest boys were smoking short dirty pipes.

The drop-curtain was raised, and a landscape rather remarkable for inaccurate perspective displayed the limited extent of the stage. A gymnast, in the tights common to his profession, entered, carrying a decanter, which he placed on the stage; then, to the softest tones that instruments sadly out of tune could well give out, he fixed his feet to its neck, and went through some extraordinary evolutions. Now came tumbling over and over, until he reached the front, a little boy, dressed and painted as a clown. He was thrown up and thrown down; he was turned and twisted into almost every conceivable shape by the gymnast, who we learned was the poor little fellow's father. These performances were loudly applauded, and concluded by the boy dancing a very grotesque dance. After an interval, during which the gentlemen of the orchestra played with desperate energy some piece of which we could not make anything, for discord reigned supreme, a vocalist in full dress came before the curtain, and in a very husky baritone, sang Lover's "Widow Malone." He was not encored, but he returned and sang another of Lover's humorous songs, without making the least humorous

impression. While the band performed the national anthem we looked closely at the decorations. They were not such as we can describe. They were simply indecent ; but this is an establishment for the amusement of the people, licensed by the authorities !

CHAPTER IV.

DURING one of our rambles on a Saturday evening, we were attracted by an announcement of excellent singing and the word "Poses" on the lamp over the door of a "free concert room" in the neighbourhood of Williamson-square. It is between ten and eleven o'clock when we enter. Passing the bar, around which are several disorderly and drunken women, in company with foreign sailors, we ascend a flight of very rickety stairs, which brings us to the concert room. It is a long, narrow apartment, in a filthy state ; the walls decorated—or rather daubed over—with landscapes in panels and figures on pedestals, done in water colours. There is a stage erected about two feet from the floor : the drop-scene is tattered, and so dirty and torn that we cannot discover what it is intended to represent. The forms for the accommodation of the audience are arranged along each side of the room, leaving a passage down the centre for the waiters. At the back of each seat or form runs a ledge, which is intended to support glasses, pipes, and ginger-beer bottles—thus answering the double purpose of a seat for the party in front and a table for the guests behind. There are thirty-eight persons present, of various ages and grades in life. Carters, bakers, shoemakers and sailors, preponderate. There is no charge made for admission, but we have to pay threepence for a glass of stale ginger beer, perfectly unpalatable. There is a piano in the room, presided at by a little hunchback, who is smoking a short pipe when he is not coughing. Seated by him is a gentleman who plays the violin—when and how he likes. Close by him is a little girl, whose head is studded with curl papers, and a drunken carter will persist in the interrogation—"What the —— to do with your head? When will it burst?"

A bell is rung : the violin player lays down his instrument, passes his fingers through his disordered hair, enters a little door at the side of his stage—the curtain rises, and the fiddler makes his appearance as a vocalist. The name of the song is not stated, and we cannot discover it. He tells us in some sort of rhyme, and in any sort of time, that when a man is single he can do as he

likes—a sentiment which is heartily applauded by the audience. He then tells us of some persons that are joined in wedlock's bonds, and enters into minute details as to the misery consequent upon such unions, concluding every verse by the question, "Now, what did these get married for?" During the singing of one of the verses there is a little interruption, caused by some sailors, who will persist in kissing the bare-necked, lightly-dressed girls who have them in tow. The singer pauses. The mistress of the room looks at him, and calls out, "Why the devil don't you go on?" To this civil question the singer replies, "If you want the song finishing, come and do it yourself, for I'm —— if I can work, and I'll be —— if I do." Having made this simple and explanatory statement, he jumps over the four footlights, draws from his pocket a dirty short pipe, sits down by the pianist, and begins to smoke. The proprietress of the room retorts on the vilely-spoken violinist with great warmth. Speaking at him through the audience, she says, "That's what you get for paying a fellow beforehand." "What's to do?" asks a gentle creature with several dinges on her face. "Why, he's —— cheeky now he's got his tin." "Oh, let him go to ——," replies the lovely nymph; "he's been drunk as muck this last hour." In corroboration of this statement we must say that he certainly was drunk—as a fiddler.

The young lady who had waited upon us, and so perseveringly pressed on us the necessity of considering if there was anything else we would like, now came up and said she would "go on." Good humour being partially restored between the proprietress and her performers, the young lady passed up the room, entered the door, and in a few moments appeared on the stage, clad in a style something between a Bavarian broom girl and a fishfag. She sang a song, in which she declared herself to be "a lady's maid—quite a lady's maid." Her tone was extremely vulgar, and with tune and time she appeared to have no acquaintance. Not meeting with any applause for this performance, she said she would make another vocal effort, and she good-humouredly asked the fiddler to accompany her. He acceded to the request most joyfully, but his cutty pipe, from which the smoke "so gracefully curled," still kept possession of his mouth. The song was something about a dream—a joyous dream; but as the vocalist scorned to pronounce the words in any dialect we could understand, and as the absence of "tune and time" on the part of the fiddler rendered "confusion worse confounded," the mysterious dream was never unravelled. We were considerably relieved when the jargon about the dream ended, and the audience—at least such of them as were conscious, for several

were asleep—appeared to be equally delighted. The fiddler jumped upon the stage and said, “The next performance will be Adam and Eve, in three pictures”—an announcement which the audience heartily applauded. The room was then darkened: the pianist ceased coughing, but still kept on smoking. The notes of the piano were then heard, the curtain rose, and before us was “Adam and Eve in Paradise.”

The living figures, to use professional language, are in “skin-tights.” Eve is ill-shaped in body, anything but innocent in face, short-necked, and lascivious-looking. Her hair is long, dark, and thrown carelessly and not without grace over her shoulders. She has a garland of fig leaves, or something to represent that, round her loins; in other respects (except the “skin-tights”) she is nude. Adam is fine in form, but in face flushed and fuddled-looking. It would be humiliating to think that these are anything but indecent caricatures of the “parents of all living.” Adam is the incarnation of indelicacy: Eve, that of indecorous and dissolute carnality. Coarseness is their distinguishing characteristic. Both are naked; they know it, but neither of them is ashamed. The first *tableau* represents Adam’s expression of surprise at the sight of Eve. The figures are turned round before the audience, so that all the “points” may be more clearly seen. Loose, ribald, and indecent jests proceed from the audience as the classical picture rotates.

The second *tableau* represents Eve’s astonishment at beholding Adam. Eve now looks temptingly at her partner, and holds out an apple towards him. Adam, as one of the sailors says, only looks “sheepish” at his tempter. In the next *tableau* Adam seizes the apple, but has no sooner done so than “the voice of the Lord” is heard in distant thunder, and they both crouch down in dismay at the displeasure they have awakened. After the figures have made the usual circle, the curtain falls, but rises again in a few minutes to show us what one of the attendants calls “The Consummation of Bliss.” Adam and Eve are still in the garden. Adam is smiling, and sitting on a bank of roses. Eve is lolling across him in the most voluptuous manner. The wicked leers which pass from eye to eye amongst the audience; the chuckle of delight which issues from many of the nymphs around; the long and loud applause which accompanies this exhibition of man’s want of moral tone, and woman’s total deprivation of moral purity, proclaim with trumpet tongue that the scene is as vicious as it is indecent—as profane as it is immoral.

Eve soon after leaves the scene where bliss is consummated, steps out of the garden into the room, condescends to sit near to and drink with a sailor “half seas over,” and obligingly informs him that

they *do* "The Morning and Evening Star," "The Graces," and other beautiful pictures, *when there is a good company in the room!*

The room was again lighted, and a little boy, said to be only seven years of age, made his appearance upon the stage to perform a clog dance—*à la* Juba. The lad was very active, and appeared unusually confident for his years. The clog dance finished, he retired for a moment or two, and came on again to give a grotesque dance, interspersed with posturing. Poor little fellow! what amusement can there be in looking at this child going through his performances—twisting his young limbs, and straining all his joints? His posturing at an end, he left the stage to act the part of a beggar. With cap in hand he went round the room soliciting coppers from the persons assembled. Whatever he gets—it can't be much—is hard-earned in the devil's workshop. We observed that little drink was consumed in the room. The hints we received from the girls, the arrangements, and the class of entertainments, indicated that the proprietor did not rely alone upon the sale of liquor for money-making. As we were leaving the concert room we passed into a room on the left, where we saw most indecent behaviour. At the bottom of the stairs, attracted by music, we turned into a large room on the right, where we found fifteen abandoned women of the most degraded class. Some of them were dancing the polka with Spanish sailors, who gesticulated a great deal, and smoked a great deal more. The tars had no jackets, but they had on red flannel shirts, long leather boots, into which the legs of their trousers were crammed. Those not indulging in the polka were sitting round the room engaged with girls. After a careful survey of the place and the people we retired, encountering at the door as we departed one of the "invisible blues," and a great number of loose girls.

Being still desirous of seeing more of the *licensed* preparations for the coming Sabbath, we entered another "free concert room." The place differs considerably from the last described, the walls not being daubed or decorated; but there is a similar stage, and a similar arrangement of forms constructed for drinking as well as for sitting purposes. The company are not so numerous, nor are the persons so "respectable." There is a small bar in this room, attended to by a good-looking, athletic young man, who is particularly active in carrying off the empty glasses and in refilling them as required. We counted twenty-five persons, evidently all from the lowest class in society. There were only five females present, but they did not appear to be of the most degraded class. Standing for a moment or two at the top of the stairs, we looked round the room, considering where we should sit, and were then accosted by a

young girl in Highland male costume, who asked us to "step forward." We accepted the invitation, and were conducted to the end of the room, which was partitioned off from the common forms. Here we might repose on hair-cushioned seats, lounge on the sofa, or loll on an easy chair. We observe now that the "Highland youth" has very short kilts, with legs much exposed and not very straight, is fluent in speech and light and flippant in manner—a sort of caricature of a taciturn "braw John Highlandman." We were informed that the part of the room where we were seated was devoted to "respectable people." It was decorated with a few engravings and prints, framed. A model of a first-class man-of-war, in a glass case, attracted the attention of a young sailor, who, on referring to the craft with a scrutinising air, said, "Well, I'm blow'd if he's got his davits out." There was no indication of a "concert" but the melancholy tones of an indifferent violin, the performer on which appeared to be "done up," or, as a vocalist afterwards informed us, "drunk," and "knocked off his pins." We asked the lady if there was to be any singing, and she replied, "I'm going to favour the company in two twos." She immediately tossed off some liquor of an amber colour which she had in a glass before her, walked up the room, and stepped on to the stage, which was only elevated about a foot from the floor, and had not the accommodation of a side door. She sang a song with a chorus that was taken up by the whole of the company, and appeared to give great satisfaction. The burden of it was, "Hurra, hurra, cigars and co-niac." We afterwards learned from the singer that it was "a very good song, the chorus of a jolly, flowing character, the melody extremely simple and expressive, and sounded remarkably well at sea," where she had the pleasure of singing it very often "to the great gratification of Captain Shrimper, of the Great Sea Snake—a crack ship that sailed well with the wind close on the quarter!" The nautical lady again jumped on the stage, carrying with her a piece of music. The regular pianist had received his wages, and, we were told, had gone on the spree; but "another gentleman" took his place at the instrument to accompany the lady in the song, "The Standard Bearer." The vocalism was wretched, and a slight hiss was heard. The lady "looked daggers," and as she left the stage cast a glance at one side, and said, "I'm very much obliged to you; I'm sure it becomes you very well; but it just shows what your eddication has been." The master of the room, a smartly dressed young man, of gentlemanly deportment, who had accidentally come in, inquired what was the matter. "Some one hissed when I was singing 'The Standard Bearer,' and I was never hissed before in my life," said

the vocalist, now almost affected to tears. One of the audience, a gentleman with "an open countenance," said, "If you mean to say that it was any of us three, you are most —— mistaken; and all I say is, that whoever it was it is a —— shame." The lady replied that she did not allude to any person in particular, but she distinctly heard a hiss. The master of the room allayed the excitement of the audience, and her professional sisters, with the assistance of some fire water, contrived to allay that of the lady.

In a short time harmony was again restored, and the Highland youth, in a consolatory tone, addressing the vocalist, said, "I never heard you sing so well. I was just saying to Mr. Nozzle (a nigger singer with blackened face, striped shirt, tight trousers, and top boots), Doesn't she sing that 'Standard Bearer' charmingly and with feeling? and he said, 'Stunning, Maria.'" The lady then turned and addressed herself to us. She lamented the little interruption, but it showed what *low* people were capable of, and would do. She then began to be communicative, and informed us that her five years' residence in America had given her a high opinion of the great republic and a thorough contempt for England. She would rather live on one meal a day in America than eat four meals of roast beef and plum pudding in her native country. No later than that day she had been speaking to a captain, who, it was very likely, would take her to the land of freedom, and she would then be glad to leave this country to its fate! What a dread alternative! During this confidential confab the lady kept sipping at a glass, and it soon became evident that her eyes were getting very glossy. The black, with a chuckle, said "her squinters" told that she was getting "sloppy," an opinion which appeared to be entertained by the whole of the performers, who assembled in a cluster at the end of the room devoted to the "respectables."

The *tête-à-tête* with the lady was disturbed by a young man, one of the audience, who jumped upon the stage, pulled off his ragged jacket, and in his shirt sleeves began to dance, having previously given directions to the fiddler what tune he was to play. The agility of the youth in what we were told was "step dancing" was great, and with his heavy shoes he beat time in an excellent manner. He continued "shaking himself up" and beating time in a variety of ways for about a quarter of an hour, when one of the ladies, seeing signs of impatience amongst the audience, called out to the youth to "drop it." This brought the dance to a termination and the dancer to a table amongst his companions, where he took a hearty swig of ale, and with a fearful oath declared that he could "dance all night and floor the —— fiddler any time." We learned

that it was a common thing for youths frequenting this and other concert rooms to appear as amateurs in dancing and singing. If they display any ability, they are encouraged to appear frequently. The vanity which operates with all amateurs induces them to bring their friends and acquaintances to see how well they can "do it." The keeper of the house reaps the benefit, to the ruin of the youths, who, in too many instances, are led to adopt as a profession those amusements in which at first they indulged only for "a lark."

The dancing "took" so well with the audience that the group of lads from which the other was selected put up another amateur to sing a song. He could not be more than sixteen or seventeen years of age. His clothes indicated that he was engaged at some foundry. He was very dirty, with lanky hair, matted with filth, which could not conceal a large development of self-esteem and a low moral region. He held his cap before him, twisting it round with both hands, and was just beginning to sing, when one of the ladies called out, "Drop that; it won't do to-night; there are people here who won't like it." Turning round, she whispered to us, "He was going to sing that — song again." The song was changed, much to the annoyance of his "pals" as he called them, who made numberless suggestions as to the selection to be made for his vocal effort. At last, in a low, vulgar voice, he commenced a song disgusting in words, filthy in hints and allusions, and entirely obscene. The proprietor was in the room, but of course interfered not with an exhibition which appeared to give so much satisfaction to the amateurs and their companions, who formed the majority of the company. The professionals, too, had no reason to complain, for their labours were lightened, and the vain youth was never within "two pennyworth" to be allowed to display his talents in public. The youths praised "Tommy" to the skies for being "plucky" enough to give "mouth" to the words of the lewd song; they swore that he was a "first-rate brick;" and as to his singing, why, "leave it there." The prices charged for drink are high, and the drink is of the worst description; yet the men and boys drink freely; another, and another still, and still another glass is called for, until "the brain begins to swim," and then at midnight the motley crew are turned into the streets to find their way home or to worse places. What a preparation for the Sabbath!

CHAPTER V.

THE place of public entertainment designated "The Royal Casino," in regard to situation and character, has distinctive features which claim for it the most serious consideration. Unlike many other nurseries or schools of vice with which some portions of the town are thickly studded, this stands alone in its iniquity, and has done so for years. During the whole period of its existence it has been known to the initiated as a place where nightly there is an undisguised display of vice in its grossest features, and where debased humanity revels in unbridled riot and licentiousness. It is situated in a densely populated locality, near one of those great trunk lines of streets which run parallel with the docks. The buildings in the street are old, irregular, and dirty-looking. There are several closely confined courts, the entrances to which, morning, noon, and night, are crowded by slatternly women. Some have children in their arms; others loll lazily on the steps of their houses, or lean over from the open windows to converse with those beneath. Ragged urchins of both sexes are running about, and some of them are sailing miniature boats in the filthy waters of the kennel. In each house many families reside, and at no distant period pigs were kept in the cellars. In one instance it was discovered that a donkey resided in the garret—thus far the brute being elevated above the man. Sailors' lodging houses abound here, and "cooking for shipping" is a sign frequently seen. Many weather-beaten tars of all nations still find homes on shore in this street and the vicinity.

The "Royal" establishment was originally a warehouse room; it was then transformed into a penny theatre, remarkable as the scene of the funny sayings of "Funny Joe," and also noted for the expeditious manner in which a murderous melo-drama could be got through, the comical way in which the tragedies were placed upon the stage, and the tragical end of the most elegant comedies. Little boys ambitious of histrionic fame here under canvas represented the billows of the ocean, and the act-drop was the Temple of Jupiter, with a quoiting match in the foreground. From the penny theatre it suddenly became a temple for religious worship. It is now *only* a *royal* casino. To render it attractive to the passer-by it is coloured gaily on the outside, and decorated with variegated bills, which announce in large characters the recent engagement of "a side-splitting comic singer," a "celebrated sentimental vocalist," and "Madame Somebody, the justly admired and exquisitely graceful operatic dancer from the Shades at Dublin." Over the entrance is

suspended a large coloured lamp, on one side of which is painted the name of the establishment, and on the other "*Dans Haus*" (Dance House).

We ascend the rickety stairs, covered with sawdust, passing on our way the entrance to the lower vaults, over which the casino is held, and with which it appears to be connected. We pay twopence to a man at the door, who smells very strongly of drink and is in conversation with one of the performers, who, as we afterwards discover, happens to be "the side-splitting comic vocalist." He is wretchedly dressed, his face bedaubed with pigments of various hues, and he eyes us as if he expected we should at once recognise him and stand treat. For the twopence we obtain a ticket, with which we enter the room, and we then learn that the ticket can be exchanged for a glass of ale, porter, ginger beer, or a cigar. This is what is termed "free admission." The moment the room is entered, its character becomes apparent. The fittings and decorations are sufficient of themselves to enable any one at a glance to pronounce it an abominably filthy resort for persons more abominable and filthy still. The room is large and not very lofty, retaining in the large beams which cross the ceiling something of its innocent and primitive character. A stage is erected, the scenery on which is more unsightly than anything ever seen in a booth at the race-course or country wakes. On the walls are suspended a number of French prints, framed and glazed, of an indecent and obscene character, and in which the nude figure is the principal attraction. There is a bar close to the entrance and opposite to the stage, from which the drinks are dispensed by a rough-looking, surly-spoken man. The corner of the room is boxed off from the audience, and forms what is called "the snug." The laughter which issues from this place, a glance which we obtain of the fittings and prints around, together with the appearance of the girls seen from time to time peeping out on the audience, sufficiently indicate the character and uses of this snug. There are seats, or rather dirty forms, for the audience, down each side of the room, the centre of the floor being reserved for dancing. Near the stage, and elevated to a level with it, sit a blind man who presides at the piano-forte, and a youth who performs on the violin.

In this place are assembled fifty-eight persons whom we can see, besides several in the snug whom we can only hear. Of this number twenty are prostitutes of the lowest grade—the remainder consisting of foreign sailors, chiefly Dutchmen, a few English tars, a sprinkling of pugilists, pickpockets, donkey-cart drivers, and three little girls. A woman with nuts and oranges to sell perambulates the room. There is a man on the stage singing a "character song,"

deprecatory of the married state. He recommends every man contemplating matrimony to pause, "cut his throat with a knife," or in some other way "put an end to his life," rather than embitter his existence with a wife. The audience, who are engaged with other matters, do not appear to take much interest in the song or singer, which, considering the sentiment, is not to be lamented. The girls are mixed up with the maritime portion of the audience, and conduct themselves in an unbecoming and extremely indecorous manner—slapping the men on the cheeks, pulling them by the whiskers, dragging them off the seats by the legs, or trying to do so, whispering and drinking with, swearing at, caressing, cajoling, and kissing them. The men, in their turn, are not surprised at this, but appear rather to relish and seek such attention. Obscene singing, drunken and dreadful denunciations din our ears, and drown the sounds of the singing and the piano. We notice a pair of legs in professional tights, sticking out from the end of the form, and are some time before we discover the body to which these useful appendages are attached. The body is hid from our view by that of a stout Dutch sailor, but after a little time it appears; and when the feet are placed on the floor and applied to their proper use, we see before us the celebrated Mad'lle Somebody, "the graceful operatic dancer from the Shades of Dublin." Had she been an inhabitant of "the shades below," she could not have looked a more depraved or abandoned character. Her petticoats are extremely short, exposing her person in a shockingly indecent manner. She is now far gone in drink, and a sailor close by, in answer to an inquiry as to who she is and what she does, replies, "The — gets drunk every night, and drinks with any one that will treat her; that's what she does!"

A bell is now rung by the surly barkeeper; the violinist suspends a board, on which is the word "polka," and preparations are made for a dance. Girls now come into the middle of the floor from the snug and from among the sailors. Some of them are professionally dressed; all are gaudily attired and painted thickly; but no ornament of person, no style of dress, no thickness of paint can conceal their depravity. Every motion of the body, every expression of the face, almost every word they utter, is indicative of unbridled lewdness. Their external decorations are studiously used to fan the flame of burning lust which has already been kindled in the breasts of these foreign sons of Neptune. Under the combined influence of intoxicating drink and the excitement of the waltz just concluded, sensuality appears to have obtained the mastery, and the men now lead out or form in the polka with these abandoned girls. Their language, as they whirl past us in the "giddy dance," is disgusting.

In some instances, for the want of male partners, the girls embrace and dance together, in others two young men are partners; but these are exceptional cases, for, generally speaking, the men are not disinclined to dance, and when the polka is ended or they are exhausted, they lead their partners to a seat or take them inside the snug, where they regale them with drink. The dancing is brought to an end on the ringing of a bell, and as soon as the excitement has subsided a little the bell rings again, and a song is announced.

Two men now present themselves on the stage, dressed as country shoemakers; but their rudely raddled faces, bleared eyes, strolling-player strut, totally destroy the illusion as to their rural simplicity. These are the precious pair of comic vocalists so extravagantly boasted of and puffed off in the bills. They commence a dialogue on the comparative qualities and varied excellences of gutta percha and leather, introducing occasionally a verse which they sing *at* each other. The dialogue is senseless trash, mixed up with vicious allusions, and accompanied by gestures so indecent that it is impossible to describe them. The swearing, blasphemy, and profanity introduced quite horrified us; yet some portions of the audience appeared to relish and applaud it. If we had not seen it, we should have believed it impossible that two men could be found sufficiently degraded to exhibit themselves in such a manner and indulge in such filthy talk, even supposing an audience could be procured to listen to them; but here they are, and this is a sample of the side-splitting vocalism provided for the people at this celebrated place of public entertainment.

The song and dialogue concluded, the men take themselves off. In a very few minutes one of them returns and sings "The May-pole," a good, simple, innocent country song in itself; but this "talented singer" must needs vary the tune to suit his own vicious taste, and alter the chorus and last verse to suit that of his depraved audience. The inuendoes thrown out, the action and grimace indulged in, were as offensive to the eye and ear as they were disgraceful to humanity. In a few minutes this foul-mouthed fellow and his partner, so regardless of common decency, emerge from a door beneath the stage, mingle with the audience, and are sponging for drink. Many of the sailors think it no common honour conferred upon them in being allowed to shake the hand, converse with, or treat these bedaubed creatures; and some, we notice, who can speak very little English, are loud in their entreaties to induce the "side-splitters" to "fet the fissel" at their expense. There is now another dance, "The Cellarius," which occasions some attempts at display on the part of the girls, and the dancers being numerous,

there is a good deal of jostling, thumping against each other, and "knocking out of step." The tempers of the women are sorely tried, and some display infirmity which breaks forth in frightful expressions. One of the girls is touched rather roughly on the bonnet by another in passing. She pulls up immediately, turns round, and, with a demoniacal expression of countenance, she utters a most horrible oath, in which the name of our Saviour is introduced. She then retires to a form, to wipe the perspiration from her shameless face and adjust her damaged millinery. A smile expressive of cool contempt is all the notice that is taken of the dreadful expression, and men and women still whirl about in this foetid atmosphere, rendered still more foul by the horrid oaths and imprecations of the abandoned crowd—

"In their own lust carried most headlong blind,
But more herein to speak I am forbidden—
Sometimes for speaking truth one may be chidden."

When this dance concludes there is another song announced, and the woman whom we had just now noticed dressed as a ballet dancer has changed her costume, and appears to sing. It is with difficulty she can walk steadily; her eyes are glossy with drink, and roll about unmeaningly and fitfully. She can hardly articulate, and her condition is noticed by some of the audience, who call out to her to "take it easy," which injunction she has the sagacity to obey. After a little delay she improves, and gradually arrives at that stage of intelligibility when what she is trying to say or sing can be tolerably well understood. The tune is "Nix my dolly, pals fake away;" the burden of the song is "Single young gentlemen, how do you do?" and to the chorus the audience beat time with their feet. The singer describes herself as a single young lady, dilates on her various virtues and accomplishments, says how happy she could make a man, and how glad she would be to meet with one to her mind. She then professes to have discovered amongst the audience the person she is in search of, and by hints, winks, and gesticulation, points out her particular favourite, concluding each verse with the chorus, "Single young gentlemen, how do you do?" The song was applauded by some, laughed at by others; but the indecencies did not appear to be condemned by any. Now, this vocalist was unmistakably drunk, and had consumed as much liquor whilst we were present as would have completely stupified any one less accustomed to such indulgence.

The man dressed as a Dutch sailor, and who had before supplied the information as to this woman's practices and performances, now entered into conversation with us, and volunteered information as to

the character of all the girls with so much earnestness as to impress us with the idea that he must have a commission upon the earnings of some of them. He was particularly anxious to introduce us to "Eliza," whose character, he said, was good. "I am an old stager (says he), and have been in the habit of coming to this room for years, and know every girl in it." He said (in language which we cannot give) that he could personally vouch that every one of the girls except the ballet girl was unchaste; and with respect to the ballet girl, his brother could vouch for her being so. In urging us to have an introduction to "Eliza," he stated, in the way of caution, that one of the girls had stolen a valuable ring and a sovereign from him on one occasion; but as he prized the ring very much he had compelled her to restore it. As for the money, he might as well lose it with these girls as with any others. Notwithstanding, he considered them very decent girls, and as they were very reasonable in their demands, it was not very expensive to cultivate their acquaintance. He further stated that the girls were induced to come there to meet the sailors, and that other portions of the building were set apart especially for their accommodation. This was all told in a cool, collected, business-like manner, but in language too gross to be indicated. Nothing could exceed the depth of degradation into which this man had sunk; and yet he is a fair representative of a class to be met with in such sinks of iniquity. Whilst we write, this abominable resort is assisting to degrade and demoralise society. The records of the police court show, and a poor wretch with her skull broken by a ginger beer bottle proves, that the worst fears which can possibly be entertained with regard to such places are daily being realised. This casino is noted in the town; for years it has stood like an Egyptian temple—passing fair without, but filled with rottenness and death within.

CHAPTER VI.

HITHERTO we have visited and described places of public entertainment the admission to which has been either free or the charge low. Price is in some things a test of character. Low prices generally render entertainments popular; high prices make them select. When we pay what is termed "a respectable" price for an article or entertainment, we expect the latter to be commensurate with the former. We ought to have an advantage in quality if not in quantity, and we are prepared to forego the one to secure the other. Many people are not unfrequently led to judge of the character of persons

to be met with at public entertainments by noticing the prices of admission, and in the main they do not find themselves deceived. If we pay threepence for admission to the gallery of a theatre, we may be prepared what to expect; but if we pay one shilling and sixpence for admission to the pit of another theatre, we expect to have different accommodation, and to be surrounded by different characters. Our rambles must not be confined to the lowest class of entertainments, but should embrace the higher and more "respectable"—those of an intellectual and instructive character. We will not in such places be likely to meet with the ragged urchin ready to risk his last penny on the turn of a dice-box or the spin of a halfpenny. We will not there meet with the lad from a foundry or the driver of a donkey cart, anxious to doff his cap and coat and stiffen his limbs with dancing to gratify his overweening vanity. We will not in such places meet with the ribald jest, be compelled to listen to the obscene song, witness profanity at which Christians must shudder, or listen to blasphemy at which all men should stand appalled. We will, moreover, see how "the respectables" conduct themselves at their places of resort, and by contrast see what lessons may be learned therefrom. For this purpose we visit a theatre. The plays performed are all submitted, we presume, to the Lord Chamberlain, and, therefore, we can have nothing to say as to the character of what is presented to us on the stage. Our task shall be to observe men and manners as they surround us.

At the entrance to the theatre, standing by the check-taker, is a representative of magisterial authority, in the person of a policeman, bearing on his arms two stripes, and on his breast a good-conduct medal. The audience in the pit numbered about one hundred and fifty, and at least fifty of these, by their dress and demeanor, declared themselves to be prostitutes. They crowded round the entrance doors, and conducted themselves in an unseemly way. Attracted, after the first act of the play, by the sound of voices in earnest conversation, the rustling of dresses, and the noise of feet, we move from our seat and look around us. The proprietor, with a view to the comfort of the audience, has run a partition round the outside of the pit. The space between the partition and the wall of the building forms a sort of promenade, where gaudily attired girls use their best endeavours to entrap the unwary or to make assignments with the fully initiated. Between the acts this promenade was thronged with persons of both sexes. The females were from fifteen to twenty-five years of age, the males from fourteen to sixty. Three young lads were there who had the air, dress, and polish of well-educated boys. They wore caps, were juvenile in their appear-

ance, and the oldest could not have been more than seventeen years of age. They were doubtless the hopes of kind fathers, the darlings of fond, affectionate, devoted mothers. Here they were walking beside, whispering and talking to, leering at, and in their way joking with coarsely behaved, vulgarly bedecked, painted beauties—girls who have nothing to recommend them but rich attire, the unnatural colour of their faces, the unchaste desire, and the utter absence of every feeling of shame and decency; abandoned ones, in whose breast the flame of pure affection must have been extinguished long ago; the peculiar glare of whose eyes suggested an early and agonising death in a lazar-house, and a dishonoured and disowned grave. Not only were young men here, but men of middle age—men who in their daily occupation pass for respectable, and fill responsible situations. The hollow laughter of the lewd ones, their coarse conversation, the various arts used to entrap the crowd of youths and men that moved around them, the nod of recognition given to some “fast young man,” the make-believe earnestness in the shake of the hand given to hoary-headed “men about town,” were pitiful to see and hear. Vulgarity and vice were ostentatiously displayed and recklessly indulged in at this place of public entertainment, *licensed by the magistrates*. The scenes in detail are

“Not to be named, my lord, not to be spoken of:
There is no chastity in language,
Without offence, to utter them.”

Theatrical entertainments in this country are popular, but they need not of necessity be surrounded by gross impurities. Young men are led to enter the theatre in search of the enjoyment and recreation which “the histrionic art” is calculated to afford. They are at first surprised at what they see; they then look on and smile. They go again: familiarity with vice breeds contempt of moral restraint, and next time they enter the promenade. They soon become bolder; and the youths who a few months ago almost shuddered at the scene before them, now walk amongst and talk with the gaudy group. Is it too great a stretch of the imagination to say that here, nightly, some young soul is shipwrecked before it has well entered upon the voyage of life? A youth who has led a vicious course of life and transgressed the laws of his country is sent to a reformatory, and the law compels the father to support him during the time of his imprisonment. How necessary it is that a similar law should be applied to those persons who indirectly license meeting places for abandoned and profligate characters—marts of prostitution, exchanges where bankrupt virtue is exposed, and promenades where vice and immorality may revel uncontrolled?

As we retired from the pit, the gay and glittering throng surrounded the door. By far the greater proportion of the girls had secured partners. The jaws of the ginshop yawned to receive them, and as they enter to obtain the stimulating yet deadening draught, they cry out to their companions, "All right; I'll meet you at the Hop." To "The Hop" we also proceeded.

The "Hop," or, as it is in more dignified language called, the "*Salle de Danse*," is not far from the theatre. Passing along a lobby covered with matting, we come to a box in which sits a man with the dress of a sailor, the looks of a loafer. This is the money-taker. We pay our shilling for admission, and descend the stairs leading to this Terpsichorean temple. There is a room on the first landing which is called a cloak room, and gentlemen are informed that here their hats, coats, umbrellas, and sticks will be taken care of. Two or three stout, cherry-cheeked, bare-necked girls are in attendance at the door to receive visitors, and inside we notice oranges, cakes, and other refreshments. We pass on, and descending another flight of steps, we find ourselves under a piazza, which is thronged by women. The ball room is now before us, and the spectacle is dazzling. The apartment is about thirty yards long by twenty wide, and very lofty. The centre is devoted to dancing purposes, the sides to promenading—the former being separated from the latter by forms covered with crimson cushions. At the north end of the room the orchestra is elevated, and appears to be well filled with musicians. The music is of a very good character. In the north-west corner are the "cigar divan" and gentleman's retiring rooms. The hall is decorated in elegant style, is well lighted, and has on the first glance (leaving out of consideration the character of the persons present) a gay appearance.

The company are engaged in a quadrille; six or eight sets are dancing. We crush our way as best we can through the crowd of women, and reach the floor—enter the promenade on the right, and pass up the room. There are here from 80 to 100 abandoned women. Their expensive, gaudy, and tasteless array of finery serves but to display their wanton depravity and wretched mode of life. Nearly every girl we had previously noticed at the theatre is here, as if the one place acted as a feeder to the other. The male portion of the audience consisted of young men, merchant's sons, clerks, shopkeepers' assistants, a few smartly dressed, rakish-looking sailors, and several well-seasoned, vicious-looking middle-aged and old men. When they were not engaged in dancing they spent the time in walking about, smoking cigars, professional harlots leaning on their arms; or, seated on the crimson cushions, they dallied with vice.

There was not one respectable woman present. There was not one girl that indicated by her appearance, person, or behaviour, any sense of shame. From this vile and glittering throng, every spark of modesty had fled; all virtuous promptings had ceased to have any weight. Unbridled passion, licentious desires, vice in its most depraved form, appeared to have obtained a mastery, and triumphed in unbounded sway. Close observation discovers that the girls are chiefly from the lowest rank of life. This is indicated by their conversation, which, in tone, manner, and character, is excessively low and indecent. One lady recognised a young man as he came into the room. He did not appear to notice her, and she called out, "Come here, Bobby; come here you Bobby Clark." Bobby did not appear to relish the familiarity, and turning his attention to another fair one, the first, with a contemptuous expression of countenance, called him a "skinny-faced——," and said he might go to a certain place. The greater portion of the conversation consisted of sentences equally expressive, elegant, and innocent. The ladies seemed to have a very extensive stock of choice and pungent repartees, at once interesting and instructive, and very much appreciated by the men. One of the youths we noticed at the theatre was here. What a spectacle! They dance, now a quadrille, then a polka, then the Varsoviana, then a galop, then the Redowa. These were repeated several times. The quadrille danced is called "Parisienne." The peculiarity which distinguishes this from any decent dance is the simple circumstance that in several of the figures, the lady as she advances throws up one of her legs to the height of the gentleman's shoulder, exposing herself in the most disgusting manner, and the gentleman in most cases touching with his hand the leg of the lady as it is so elevated. The excessive vulgarity of this dance, the intense satisfaction and enjoyment it appears to give to all engaged in it, at once stamp the character of the scene and the actors. Here are young men who have sisters they profess to respect, men who have wives and daughters they profess to love: what should their reflections be on the morrow, whilst by the domestic hearth they are receiving the various acts of kindness which feminine grace in the purity and sancity of home loves so cheerfully to perform? Here is a young man—a handsome young fellow. We noticed his manly form and graceful figure only ten short hours before. How different his occupation then. He was at the counter in one of our banks, paying in upwards of a thousand pounds to the credit of his employer. Would it be anything to *his* credit to be found where he is now? Would his master commend him for his frugality in money or time if he found him amidst enjoyments to which the *salle de danse* is but the threshold?

The dancing is generally kept up with great vigour. Men and women whirl about in the giddy, sensual throng. Old women, bedizened brothel keepers, hover about, superintending and directing the seductive artifices which the unfortunate victims of vicious habits are industriously using. That girl in green silk, flounced to the waist, clasped in the arms of the young man before noticed, is from her lips distilling the poison in his ear. It may take effect and embitter his life for years to come.

"Oh that men's ears should be
To counsel deaf, but not to flattery."

The excitement and fatigue consequent upon dancing and its associations in a scene like this create thirst, to allay which strong waters are sought for, and many girls and men are seen to retire for refreshment. Following the groups which preceded us, we obtained a check for re-admission, and proceeded to an establishment adjoining, called "The Supper Rooms." The window which looked into the street was stocked with steaks and chops, garnished with parsley; at other times we have seen there gold fish imprisoned in a glass globe, and dishes covered with raw lobsters, emblematic of what may be found within. A youth stands close by, to save those who enter the trouble of opening the door. We enter. The place has something of the appearance of an eating-house, yet more of the spirit vaults. Passing the bar and descending a flight of stairs, we reach a room divided into small compartments, each of which contains a table covered with a white napkin, at which about six persons can be accommodated. Waiters carefully dressed in black, with neckcloths exquisitely white, holding towels in their hands, wish to know our will. We ask for coffee; they have it not. We request tea; they do not keep it. "What have you to drink? we ask. "Ale, porter, wine, brandy, and bitter ale; but you'll get them further on," was the reply. We follow the directions, and enter a spacious room, tastefully fitted up—glass chandeliers pendant from the ceiling; seats around, stuffed and spongy; elegant and luxurious lounging chairs, sofas, large and covered with velvet, an extensive bar, behind which the waiters appear to be kept busy, and on which is displayed in gilt letters the suggestive words "Mulled Port." It is now the "witching time of night;" some minutes have elapsed since the clock struck twelve. Several young men with ladies are here from the dancing room, also ladies by themselves, laughing, jeering, swearing, drinking; men doing the same with the addition of smoking. The company form themselves into little groups. The group opposite to us consists of three girls, who have wine before them, and are now engaged examining photographic portraits. From

the conversation we learn that these are portraits of the lovers of these ladies. "Don't you know that?" says one to the waiter, "that's the young man as you have seen here with me hundreds of times." The reflection crossed our mind—where is he now? He had been in this place with this broad-faced, foul-mouthed girl hundreds of times. He had spent his money, wasted his substance in this riotous mode of life, had loved this vile woman, had presented his portrait to her. She is here, laughing at his folly; but *where is he?* One very young girl, decked out in fawn-coloured satin, with primrose-coloured bonnet and large feather, is most boisterous in her mirth—loud and brazen in her lewdness. She laughs, jumps about, swears, pulls the whiskers of the men, curses the eyes of the waiter, calls him a variety of unmentionable names, wants "a glass of wine with a cinder in it," and conducts herself in a manner so disgusting as almost to shame her professional sisters. We had noticed her in the ballroom, seen her engaged in almost every dance. The wine was doing its work! We left the "supper rooms," and re-entered the *salle de danse*.

The scene had undergone little change. There was perhaps, more noise, more bustle, about the piazza; the conduct of the girls and women in the promenade was more disgraceful, their passions less under control. The dance was again "The Parisienne Quadrille." It appeared to be enjoyed more thoroughly than before. The women were more brazen-faced, the men less careful of appearances. The men gloried and the women revelled in this devilish dance. The vigorous efforts of the girls to expose themselves more fully called forth shouts of approbation, smiles of satisfaction. There were here fathers and sons, husbands and brothers, merchants, captains, and clerks, bullies and pimps, stepping and hopping, whirling and twirling, entwined and entwisted in the arms of the vilest harlots that infest our town. At one o'clock the band strikes up the national anthem; the ladies and gentlemen pair off; the lights are lowered; we are in the street. The youth we had first seen in the theatre was smoking a cigar at the door, and we heard him informing his friend that he was going with Maria to Finch-st.

"The wolves have prey'd, and, look, the gentle day
Before the wheels of Phœbus round about
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey."

"THE GLASGOW SALLE DE DANSE."—On Saturday, at the Central Police Court, (Baillies Bright and Clouston presiding,) Absalom Shackleton, lessee of the Argyle Rooms, Argyle-street, which he has styled the "Salle de Danse," was accused of having, on Monday, the 22nd of September last, permitted disorderly conduct by persons assembled within his premises, and of having knowingly harboured prosti-

tutes, and permitted or suffered men and women of notoriously bad fame to meet and assemble therein, in contravention of the Police Act. This case had been continued on two separate occasions, defendant craving delay for the purpose of procuring counsel. He pleaded not guilty, and was defended by Mr. F. W. Clark, advocate. The case lasted fully three hours; but it is quite unnecessary to enter minutely into the evidence for the prosecution, which proved that the dancing hall was nightly frequented by the most abandoned women of the town, and that indecent pranks were witnessed therein. The night detective officers proved that they had traced females who had allured young men from this den, when it was closed, to their own haunts. Captain Smart also proved that defendant had applied to him for two policemen to keep order in his hall, but he refused to grant men for such a purpose, at the same time warning Shackleton of the disreputable characters he was permitting to congregate within his hall, and stating most distinctly that if he did not discontinue the practice, the authorities will interfere. For the defence, Shackleton adduced his female servants, several of his fiddlers, and other witnesses. These persons spoke of the gathering as a very innocent affair, and said they had never seen anything wrong in defendant's place, and that they had never seen any of the women who were dancing there previously. Mr. Lang, fiscal, craved a conviction, and remarked that it was the most abominable case that had ever come under his notice. Mr. Clark having replied for the defendant at great length, Bailie Clouston, in delivering judgment, said—Well, Mr. Shackleton, we have given this case a very attentive hearing. The offence charged—that of permitting disorderly conduct within your premises, and of having harboured prostitutes, and suffered men and women of notoriously bad fame to meet and assemble therein—has been brought very forcibly before us to-day. Your case has been ably conducted by your counsel, but I am very sorry to say that the scenes which have been witnessed in your place satisfy the court that the charge has been fully made out. The evidence brought before us has been very strong. We have officers of undoubted character who have spoken to the charge; and we have respectable men who have also brought out in very strong terms the nature of the amusement afforded. But, above all, we have to refer to the evidence of Captain Smart, who warned you as to the character of the persons assembling within your place; but this warning you did not seem to give any attention to, but continued from night to night the same course. I have consulted with my brother magistrate, and we regret much to see such an institution as yours is, while so much is doing by philanthropists, the clergy, and philanthropic societies, whether in the way of mechanics' institutions, concerts, or other amusements of an innocent and instructive description, to draw people away from evil company—we do exceedingly regret to see brought amongst us an amusement of this kind. If the persons attending your place were respectable, I would be the last to put it down; but we find a different description of people altogether. The charge is proved, for which you are fined in the sum of £10, or sixty days' imprisonment. Permit me to tell you that there will be a very vigilant watch kept over you, and if similar scenes are permitted to take place, you will be again brought up, and not only fined, but your place shut up, altogether. The fine was paid, under protest. [When will Liverpool magistrates follow the excellent example of their brethren in Glasgow?]

CHAPTER VII.

THE dancing rooms—or, as they are vulgarly termed, “the hops”—described in the last two papers, have a marked peculiarity which must ever distinguish them from those now about to be noticed. In the former, none but vicious and abandoned women are seen: in

the latter depraved women are the exception—decent, moral girls, or those who wish to pass and do pass for such, are the rule. In the former rooms, men heartless and depraved have no necessity to ply any seductive arts or wiles; but to the latter they bring and put into use every bait, snare, or trap which they can invent, in order that weak and warm-tempered girls may, under the excitement consequent upon the dance, become their prey—the prey of these cold-hearted and vicious scoundrels. Men and women who visit the former, know well, or have every reason to expect, what the result will be. They have but one object. The frequenters of the rooms now under notice are vastly different. Their motive and object may in the first instance be innocent—are not, at all events, solely vicious.

The room we first visit has a very obscure entrance, although we are told by one who often goes there that it is a “good hop,” and has attained some degree of celebrity. It is the third story of a building, the lower ones of which are devoted to the sale of articles which go far to decorate and improve the appearance of the fair sex. From a narrow dirty street we ascend a flight of narrow but cleanly swept stairs. On arriving at the door we pay sixpence, and pass into the room. We are directed to the gentlemen’s dressing room, which we find is to some extent a refreshment room also. In the principal room there is a pale, sickly-looking child presiding at the piano, and a man with an oblique face and vision performing on the violin: a second violinist and a kettle-drum player sit by his side. The company are just forming for a quadrille. There are on the floor sixty-four persons, chiefly young people, the majority varying from sixteen to twenty years of age, four very young girls, not more than ten years of age, dressed in white, with pink rosettes on their shoulders and the fronts of their dresses. The company seem disposed to behave with becoming gravity, and succeed, with little exception, during the first few figures of the quadrille, when the excitement causes the natural restraint to give way, and the conduct becomes more free and less faultless. The girls have in many cases dresses with short sleeves, their arms being totally uncovered; but on the whole they are modestly and genteelly attired, and most of them seem to have been engaged during the day in a respectable occupation. The young men have the appearance of respectable youths, merchants’ clerks, shop assistants, and a few mechanic apprentices. The room was originally opened as a dancing class, but by degrees has merged into “an assembly,” which meets twice a week. There is no introduction necessary to gain admission. Young men or women go in some instances together, in others alone, and “pick up,”

as it is termed, with "sweethearts," or form associations and companionships which have in every instance a powerful influence on their future life. Considering the object for which they meet, and the manner in which the time is spent, the fearful evils, personal and social, continually resulting therefrom, are not to be marvelled at.

We notice an elderly lady engaged in the quadrille; she is attired in deep mourning, her head lustrously bedecked with "bugle flowers." We hear the sound of these bugles as she bustles about, and notice that they play against her fat rosy cheeks, purpling the parts with their continued pattering. She seems to enjoy the dancing very much, and is carefully attended to and twirled about, lusty as she is, by a man about thirty-five years of age, who has all the appearance and most of the characteristics of a thoroughly well-seasoned libertine, and yet is vain enough to look upon himself as something of a lady-killer, for, although engaged with the rosy rotund dame, he loses no opportunity of leering wickedly at the girls in the vicinity. The lady, from her appearance, and conversation, is a widow, and we inferred

"Her husband had left her to plough the salt seas;
He'd gone to the bottom—his guineas she'd got them,
So without any labour she lives at her ease."

A nicely dressed, genteel girl in the same set, who receives a good deal of the stout widow's attention, we take to be her daughter. The mother evidently deems it becoming—does not consider it beneath her dignity—to bring her daughter to this and other assemblies, in order that the girl may be properly introduced into life! She takes the precaution to superintend the introduction, and from what we see of her conduct here loses no opportunity of securing for her daughter what she considers a suitable partner.

Several of the youngmen are not fully initiated into the mysteries of the dance, and their blunders cause much fun to themselves and partners. There is a good deal of knocking against each other, but on no occasion do we see their temper in any way ruffled. Those who come simply to enjoy the dance, not with any ulterior object in view, are really hearty, and do enjoy it. There are older hands not so joyous: the fire raging within is indicated by the nervous twitching of the features, and the crafty, cat-like movement with which they advance to their partners. The dance concluded, the girls are led by their partners to the forms or into the refreshment rooms, and there is a good deal of dawdling and chatting indulged in by both sexes until another dance is announced. In such manner is the time passed. The fascination which this sort of amusement has for many young men was clearly shown on this occasion. A smart

young fellow was hailed by another, "Holloa, Tom, what a stranger you are." The reply was, "Well, yes, I have not been here for two nights, and I did all I could to stop away, and wanted to do it; but do what I could it was no go, and I was compelled to come and have a turn with you to-night." When such is the hold a dancing room has on *men*, what may it be expected to have on girls, especially those of a class for which the glitter of well-lighted rooms and the allurements of showy dress prove such irresistible temptations?

In this room we are informed that care is taken by the proprietor to exclude all improper characters. If an abandoned woman presents herself, she is turned back. If one by any means gets in, immediately on its becoming known she is expelled. If a girl is known to be loose or immoral in her habits, she is deemed unworthy to meet in this assembly; and whilst all this care is exercised on behalf of the softer sex, what is done to exclude hardened and devoted debauchees of the other sex? Nothing. Modest, virtuous girls are drawn here by the announcement that all vile women are forbidden, and are thus led into the company and too often fall into the traps set by vicious and designing men for their capture and ruin. Away with the hypocrisy and injustice of our day, which are ever ready to afford opportunities to the seducer, whom they shield, and pour the full force of denunciation on his unfortunate victim. The galop concludes the entertainment, and at eleven o'clock the room is closed. Young men take their partners home in the majority of cases, or the girls form little parties and ramble home themselves, passing through the streets of such a town as Liverpool between eleven and twelve o'clock. They are not all so well off as the captain's daughter: she has her mother to protect her; and one of the last voices we hear, mingled with the sound of the bugles, is that of the jolly, fat, rosy, buxom, hearty widow, telling some young man to "be sure and come in time for tea!"

On another evening, about ten o'clock, we visited a very celebrated dancing saloon, attracted by what we had heard of its character and the crowds of people that thronged to the enjoyment it affords. On looking at the place before we enter, we notice a bill, from which we learn that the admission on Saturday is advanced to one shilling, *in consequence of the crowding on that evening*. We pay sixpence, and soon find ourselves in a spacious, well-lighted room. There is a band of musicians on an elevated platform at one end, and a number of prostitutes, a bar, and a policeman at the other. Over the bar is a small gallery, which looks something like a large box at a minor theatre. There are cushioned forms down each side of the apartment, on which the company not engaged in the dance are seated.

We walk up the room and take a seat, just before a dance is announced. The music begins, and the proprietor of the room stands up in the centre of the floor, having white kid gloves on, and in his right hand a baton, with which he beats time, and so directs the enjoyment of his visitors. The girls here do not remove either bonnets or mantles, cloaks or veils, but just turn in from their walk, or in many cases, to judge from their appearance, from their work, to spend an hour or two in dancing with the male friends who may have brought them, or whom they meet here. There are fifty-eight persons present, male and female, when we enter. This number afterwards increased, but at no period during our stay did it exceed eighty. We did not notice many common girls engaged in the dance. These characters remained about the bar, or were seated in the gallery, in company with men whose conduct was very questionable. The women and girls dancing were in many cases modestly attired, but their looks and carriage betrayed the slippery path on which they were just entering. Others, further advanced in a vicious course, but who had not yet thrown off the virtuous trammels which a father's look and a mother's love bound around them, were freer in their style of dancing, and less ashamed to throw themselves into vulgar attitudes, or to embrace the young men with whom they danced with a warmth and meaning unknown to modesty and virtue. There was much whispering during the dance, and by some couples during a polka the excitement manifested was intense. The faces of the girls became flushed, and the continued whirl caused those unaccustomed to it to stagger and give way. They were led to their seats by their partners, and whilst looking on them panting for breath, their eyes rolling wildly, it could easily be seen that

"Through the full veins the gentle poison swims,
And wakes to wantonness the willing limbs."

We noticed one very good-looking girl, evidently a novice, in company with another who had lost all modesty, and would speedily lose shame. She was led out to dance several times, but after two or three turns of the room she had to give in and be led to a seat. Her form and bearing proved her to have been carefully brought up, and it was much to be regretted that she should be found here in such company. We could clearly read her history. Her father was dead; he had been unable or had failed to make any provision for his family. The widowed mother, struggling with pinching penury, was striving hard to bring her family up in an honest course of life. The sons were put to work; the daughter was apprenticed to a milliner. She had left her work at eight or nine o'clock, and had

been induced, perhaps readily enough, by her vile companions, to turn into "The Hop" for an hour. "Mr So-and-so is sure to be there, and we will have a good dance and a nice walk home." And here she is. Her mother is stitching away in her humble abode, keeping the girl's supper nice and warm, wondering how she is so late, and complaining to herself how hard it is that her daughter should be kept such long hours.

We notice a small hunch-backed woman dancing vigorously with a stout young man, who smokes a large-headed pipe the while. She is attired in deep mourning, and has on a very serious visage; this, with her habiliments, contrasts strangely with her present occupation. There are several young Frenchmen here, who smoke and dance *con amore*. They cannot speak much English, but seem to know sufficient of it to enable them to converse with some English girls they have in company. The laughter of the girls occasioned by the whispering of the men is very boisterous and unbecoming. There are several girls and young men, evidently sweethearts, who have been out for a walk, and turn in here to have an hour's dancing. They go through the dances with great spirit; and although there is not much grace or elegance in their forms, figures, or carriage, they are hearty, and so far as can be seen here, innocent enough. We supposed in the first instance that girls from shops and milliners' apprentices formed a large proportion of the frequenters of this room. An incident which has since occurred puts this in a clearer light. We went to a very respectable shop, in a well-accustomed street in this town, to purchase a pair of gloves, and we were attended to by a young woman whom we had noticed in this dancing room, and to whom our attention had been particularly called, having observed her give an unmistakeably wicked wink to a man in the room. In a few weeks after, we met her gaudily dressed, having evidently commenced a vicious course of life. This is not stated as a reflection on a class—it is a fact given in corroboration of our view, and the deduction to be drawn from it must be left to the reader. The most startling feature in this room is the fact that virtuous girls go, or are taken here, into the company of common prostitutes. They are here to be seen in their transition state from virtue to vice. A girl may come in here innocent and chaste, but after spending an evening in such company, she cannot leave without contamination. From this point the descent is rapid—easily made; the return doubtful, and seldom, if ever, effected.

CHAPTER VIII.

It is with feelings of great pleasure that we now turn to another phase of Liverpool Life. We have not by any means exhausted the materials collected for exposing the abominable resorts and vicious haunts which deprave our youth and degrade our town ; but as we proceed, and by way of contrast and relief to ourselves, and no doubt to our readers, we intend to introduce occasionally a paper or two to show what is being done *for* the the people—what is being done to humanise and elevate the masses. Is it not surprising that in some quarters our matter, manner, and motives have been misrepresented or condemned. By the young fop, with quizzing-glass to his eye, and who could only exclaim “disgusting,” *our* aim would not be seen, neither was *our* end desired. The hoary-headed sinner, dreading our exposure of his haunts and habits, has, in unmeasured terms, denounced both end and aim ; the young libertine has actually worked himself into a frenzy on the subject ; and in almost every taproom the voice that has been loudest raised against exposure has been that of the greatest scapegrace. Even where the object was professedly appreciated, the means adopted for its accomplishment have in some instances been questioned—the mode tabooed. To attempt the cure of social evils by gently covering them over with “the fig-leaves of decent reticence,” is nothing new ; were the attempt ever to succeed, a novelty would be the result. That public exposure of ill doings not unfrequently leads to amendment and well doing, many believe ; and recent events which are now the subject of history testify to the truth of this opinion. In all cases purification may be expected from publicity. There are ever to be found mawkish sentimentalists ready to cry out against, or cry down, the wholesome exposure of corrupting influences which silently work into and destroy the best features of our social life. Their profession is make-believe to lament, their practice studiously to conceal. To another class, *deeply interested*, such exposure suggests the cry, as of old, “our craft is in danger ;” and they of course entertain the worst possible fears as to the result. Deeply as every well-wisher of his species should regret the *cause* which led to the publication of this series of papers, we feel cheered in our task by hopes for the consequence, by the expressions of approval which crowd upon us, especially from clergymen and ministers, by the fact that one of the dens of iniquity has been closed since our exposure ; and so leave all sentimental croakers, objectors, and their objections, to their inevitable fate.

We have seen what the authorities permit individuals to provide for the recreation of the masses ; we will now see what the authorities themselves provide for this purpose. First, and above all, we class the Public Baths and Washhouses established by the Town Council. These institutions, extensively as they are known, and largely as they are taken advantage of by those for whom they were intended, are, notwithstanding, by many thousands totally uncared for and neglected. It may, perhaps, excite surprise that some members of our local legislature know nothing more of these life-invigorating and body-cleansing establishments than they may be supposed to learn from hearing the proceedings of the baths committee read from time to time in the council chamber. Yet the public baths reflect honour on the town, bestow abundant credit on the council, are model sanitary purifiers, and are hourly bestowing blessings, cheap, pure, and healthful, on the toiling masses of this great community. A few statistics will bear out this statement. The weekly bath returns are made up each Wednesday. During last week, nearly 25,000 persons bathed at the public baths, at a cost to themselves of more than £500. At Cornwallis-street baths, the daily receipts range from 4s. 6d. to £53 6s. 5d. Last week, at that establishment alone, 10,516 persons bathed, the receipts being upwards of £179. In the corresponding week of last year, the receipts were £53, and the number of bathers 3,678. On Saturday, throughout the year, the number of bathers is generally double that on any other day of the week.

The Corporation Baths, as is well known, are situated in Cornwallis-street, Paul-street, and George's Pierhead. Paul-street baths have attached to them washhouses, and for the south end of the town there are washhouses in Upper Frederick-street. The latter were originally the public baths—the first of the kind established in this town or country—and were opened fourteen years ago, principally through the instrumentality of that friend of the poor, William Rathbone. It is to the baths in Cornwallis-street that we now wish to draw particular attention. They are the largest, most modern, best frequented, and contain the most recent improvements. The foundation-stone was laid in 1849, by Mr. J. A. Tinne, the then chairman of the health committee. The edifice was designed by and erected under the superintendence of the borough engineer, Mr. James Newlands ; and well do the baths deserve the high encomiums which have been passed upon them by celebrated and professional men who have visited them. The building contains three large plunge baths—first, second, and third class ; sixty private warm baths of similar classes ; together with shower,

vapour, and sitz baths ; the whole being under the management of Mr. Andrew Clarke, the superintendent.

The first thing that strikes the visitor to these baths is the scrupulous cleanliness everywhere observable, the order and regularity with which business is transacted, and the highly trained and systematic manner in which all the servants appear to discharge their duties—no unnecessary noise, no bustle, even when business is brisk, and bathers are waiting for bath rooms. “The system” here seen in operation is not only commendable, but worthy of imitation. This opinion is formed after having frequently visited all the public baths in Liverpool during the whole time they have been in operation. That all the arrangements are brought into such a state of efficiency is to be attributed in a great measure to the long experience and firm yet respectful demeanour of the superintendent, who is zealously supported in all his plans and arrangements by the present chairman and vice-chairman, Messrs. Wagstaff and Fernihough, and some of the other members of the baths committee. If it be a good quality in a servant to take a deep interest in his work, and display zeal and assiduity in the discharge of his duties, the town council are fortunate in securing the services of Mr. Clarke. He thoroughly identifies himself with the place by all he does and says ; and as we walk through the various departments accompanied by him, and listen to the continuous flow of common-sense observations, given, as they are, with a rich smack of the true Milesian brogue, the fact is still further impressed upon us. He is a tall, powerful, well-built man. In early life he was engaged in constructing the wooden walls of old England, and in middle age he assisted to man them. He has been in all quarters of the globe, and picked up a variety of information, and thus profited by his travels. He is not possessed of showy or shining qualities, but, like a good, old-fashioned craft, carries a good cargo without making much display. Age is fast telling on him, and he has undergone much change since he “mixed a nice comfortable bath” for us, fourteen years ago, in Frederick-street. He is yet hale, hearty, and obliging, and we hope he may long remain so, and that speedily the great wish of his heart may be granted him—“a regular supply of water from Rivington, when I can keep my fountain in play, and my place in the order it should be.”

In the old-fashioned way, and in order to convey an idea of the baths to our readers, we will begin at the bottom, and look at the third-class plunge bath, or, as it is commonly called, the “twopenny.” We are now at the entrance, talking with the superintendent. It is Saturday evening, about eight o’clock ; half-a-dozen dirty-looking

little fellows, shoeblacks and others, are coming up the steps. Cash in hand, they walk up to the money taker, and demand "a two-penny'un." They receive for the twopence a ticket and a clean coarse towel. There is no doubt of their having been here before, for as soon as they obtain the ticket and towel they run down the flight of steps leading to the baths, screaming with delight in anticipation of their enjoyment. We follow them, the superintendent observing as we descend, "These pay me the best ; they are my best customers." The noise of boys out of the water, the splashing and shouting of those in, prepared us to some extent for the scene that awaits us. On entering the bath we find upwards of a hundred boys, most of them in a state of nudity, ducking, diving, floundering, plunging, dousing, sousing, rolling, sprawling, tossing and tumbling in the water. The turmoil in the water, the tumult of voices out, are for the first few moments positively stupifying. Mr. Clarke notices our consternation, and quietly chuckles at the sight. The bath is forty-one feet long by twenty-seven wide ; the water is five feet deep at one end, two-and-a-half at the other ; the floor is of asphalte, the sides of stone ; there is a "springboard" placed at the deep end to assist the lads in diving. There are twenty-four rooms, or receiving boxes, around the bath, all being destitute of doors. In these the bathers place their clothes, and as many as ten or twelve boys at one time deposit their habiliments in one of these boxes. As our conductor feelingly remarks, "Poor little fellows ! their clothes in most cases occupy little room, and what I give them is the only clean covering they ever get."

In the good old days of good old Egerton Smith, who, as is well known, took an active part in promoting a knowledge of the useful art of swimming, it was our practice and privilege to visit the Floating Bath. On one occasion a young man unacquainted with the bath, jumped into the "deep end," and, as he could not swim, was in some danger. We assisted him into shallow water, and afterwards in the bath became very friendly ; both being destitute of clothes, an equality was constituted. We returned to our respective dressing rooms and again met on the deck whilst "waiting for the boat." Much to our surprise, the young man did not speak. He was dressed in the height of fashion, considered himself no doubt a gentleman, and could not condescend to notice or look upon plebeians. "Old Egerton," as he was familiarly and affectionately called, saw this, very likely knew what we *felt*, and quietly walking up, he took hold of our jacket, and rubbing the cloth, he said, "Never mind him : *this* is the difference between you ; and though you will now have to be two people, the same boat will carry you both ashore." This was

our first lesson in "the philosophy of clothes." It made a deep impression, and we felt it in full force whilst looking at the crowd of boys and young men disporting themselves so boisterously, yet innocently, in the twopenny plunge bath. As old Sandy Mackay remarks, "There, ye're a' brithers noo, on the one broad, gran' fundamental principle o' want o' breeks!"

Many gentlemen visiting this bath are impressed with the good appearance of the boys when destitute of clothes. Lord Alfred Paget, who visited it a short time since, in company with the Earl of Derby, expressed his great surprise and astonishment when looking at the clear skins, well-knitted frames, and in some instances wonderfully developed muscles of the boys. "They might," said he, "be all noblemen's sons." What an admission! He could have gone further than this, and yet have spoken the truth.

Many of the boys not having any regular employment stay a long time in the water. The keeper tells us that he notices boys who bring a little bread with them; they will stay in the water two or three hours, going out occasionally into the box to eat a little food, and then dash into the water again. Many of them are very expert swimmers, and they all appear to be excellent divers. A deal of amusement, of a very profitable character to the boys, is frequently witnessed by visitors throwing money into the water, in order that the boys may dive for it. The vice-chairman of the committee (Mr. J. C. Fernihough) is well known by the boys for his enjoyment of this sport, and his presence with a few friends is generally the signal for a display of diving diversion. The gentlemen cast their coin upon the waters, and it is found, after the lapse of a few moments, in the possession of some of the boys, who swim about in great glee, holding the much-prized coin between their teeth. Their dexterity in diving and bringing up the smallest coin is remarkable; and although in many cases they not unfrequently jump on each other, we witness no display of ill temper. On remarking this to our guide, he says, "I had many a hard turn with them before I got them to this order; but now most of them know that so long as they behave decently they will be permitted to remain, and no longer; and as soon as I see or hear of any act of violence, they have me down on them." Mr. Clarke seems to take an interest in the lads learning to swim, and says, "the next generation will be a generation of swimmers, and in a great seaport like this it ought to be so: the great majority will be indebted to my baths for that."

There are some strange scenes to be met with at "the twopenny." On one occasion a swimming match had been determined on between two boys, one of whom had lost an arm; the other was destitute of

a leg. With that love of fair play which is and we hope ever will be the distinguishing characteristic of true Britons, the whole of the boys, to the number of eighty or ninety, left the bath, and stood, naked, shouting, huzzaing, and rollicking, on the brink. By this means they secured for the contending swimmers a "clear course and no favour." The distance was once round, starting from the shallow end. The excitement of the spectators was very great, and the cries most comical. "Now legs;" "Bravo, arms;" "Go it, pegleg;" "Pitch into it, stumpy," resounded on all sides. More fun of an innocent character amongst boys of such a class we never saw. Many of the lads laughed until they fell into the water; others fell over them for fun; even the grave face of the bath-keeper relaxed into a genial smile, and all were uproariously mirthful. It soon became evident that legs had the advantage. He with the two propellers gained speedily on his opponent, and came in an easy victor. He was speedily surrounded by his companions, one of whom, clapping him on the back, observed, "I knew very well you could soon take slates out of stumpy." In a few moments they were all in the bath again, kicking, splashing, and tossing about, and enjoying themselves in the water as only boys can.

We leave the "twopenny," and pass on to the fourpenny plunge bath. This is similar in appearance to that noticed, but, not being so much used, the place has not such a dingy appearance. The rooms here have a looking-glass and door attached to each. They are twenty-six in number. This bath is frequented more by middle-aged and young men, who find it hard to stand the rollicking fun of the boys, and therefore pay an additional twopence for the additional comfort. Seeing the crowded state of the twopenny bath, we learn with great satisfaction that the committee have resolved to reduce the price of the fourpenny to twopence. This will likely have the effect of inducing more to go into the first-class bath, whilst it will be conferring a great boon on those of the humbler class, to whom twopence is a great consideration, and a good bath a positive necessity. It is very pleasing to observe here the young and middle-aged mechanic laying out a few pence so judiciously on a Saturday evening. Contrast what may be obtained here for fourpence or for twopence, with what may be obtained for a like amount at the gorgeous and glaring palaces that are fast adorning every corner of our streets; and reflect also which mode of expenditure constitutes the best preparation for the Sabbath. It is said that cleanliness is next to godliness, that health of mind is in a great measure dependent upon that of the body, and that cleanliness of the one will induce to purity of the other. These things, it may be supposed, savour too

much of the earth for our ministers to notice in the present day, or we might hear more of washings and purifications, and less of religious rancour, than we now do. That filthiness of person and viciousness of disposition are closely allied, all must admit; and all must admire, even in its present limited extent, the means which our local governors take to purify the bodies of the people. Every ward in the town ought to have its public bath. Baths would be much cheaper than gaols—the more cleansing the less crime; and if the price of the plunge baths could be reduced to a penny for the poorest class the change would be glorious.

We pass on now to the first-class plunge bath, which is a very beautiful building. The style and decoration are purely Egyptian; the colouring is in exquisite harmony, displays good taste and sound judgment, and is altogether the best display of ornamentation we have seen in Liverpool. The bath is fifty-seven feet long by forty-one wide; the sides are of tiles, the floor of Yorkshire flag stone; the bath is emptied and the floor is thoroughly scoured with sandstone twice a week. The water is three feet deep at one end, and seven at the other. By reason of the floor being lighter in colour than the other baths, the water here has a beautifully clean appearance. There are thirty-three dressing rooms round the bath, each of which contains a looking-glass and bootjack. This bath is not frequented so much as we might expect. There are now twenty persons in it, chiefly young or middle-aged men. We notice one youth who is an excellent swimmer, and the bath-keeper informs us that this youth on one occasion swam round the bath forty-five times, thus performing a distance of upwards of two miles in one hour and three-quarters. In the centre of the bath stands a fountain, in the form of a vase, from the edge of which the jets send forth the water. When this is in play with two-thirds of the pressure on, the form is very beautiful. It is a source of regret to the superintendent that he cannot keep the fountain continually in play, by reason of the scarcity of water; “but,” says he, “when Rivington is all right, and I get my proper supply, I will keep it going, for, besides moderating the temperature of the bath, it is beautiful and refreshing to the eye.”

We now visit the department of the building devoted to private warm baths. The charges for these are—First-class, one shilling; second class, sixpence; third class, twopence. It is very interesting to observe the distinction which is made between the classes. In the first we find a carpet, two chairs, a bootjack, boothooks, shoe-horn, fleshbrush, hairbrush, and comb, a large looking-glass, hand-ewer and soap, and three towels. We notice further the fleshbrush has a long handle. There is also a tap by which the bather can

regulate the temperature of the bath. In the second class we find a carpet, a chair, a small looking-glass, a fleshbrush without any handle, a tap for regulating the temperature, and two towels. In the third class we see no carpet, no fleshbrush, no tap, one towel, and no looking-glass. Thus it would appear, as was suggested by a gruff-looking mechanic—probably a Chartist—"That a poor fellow who can only pay twopence is not worth looking at, and it would do him no good to be allowed to see himself! and as to a fleshbrush, it's the swells as needs all that sort of thing." In one respect the baths are all alike—they are exquisitely clean. The warm baths are frequented chiefly by mechanics and persons engaged in sedentary occupations. All that we had an opportunity of conversing with expressed themselves in the strongest manner and in grateful terms as to the good which the establishment had conferred on them physically and socially. Our conversation with the superintendent showed this in a much stronger and clearer light.

"I have men coming to me now," said he, "who used to come to my place in Frederick-street fourteen years ago. I noticed them week after week, and now look for them as regularly as I do for my meals. At first they were content with merely bathing; after a few weeks I noticed them bringing small bundles under their arms, which I soon discovered to contain a change of linen, or probably, in addition, a clean singlet and stockings. They then brought a piece of soap with them, and gave themselves a thorough cleaning and brushing. And many a Saturday night, after I have closed my place and gone to take a walk through the market, I have met some of those customers of mine, nicely cleaned up, their wives with them, sober and respectable, making their little purchases for the week. Such sights, I assure you, do my heart good to see; and what I often say, the Corporation never have done, nor will they ever, lay money out to a better advantage than in building baths for the people."

In addition to the first, second, and third class private warm and plunge baths, the charges for which range from a shilling to twopence, private cold shower baths may be had in the third class for a penny. We are glad to learn that many a working man on his way to his daily toil steps into the baths at Cornwallis-street, pays his penny, gets a clean towel, and, entering into the third class bath room, refreshes himself by a cold ablution in the morning.

The warm baths are more in requisition on Saturday evenings and Sunday mornings, and for this purpose the committee wisely keep them open until ten o'clock on Saturday, and from six to nine on Sunday morning. We confess that the visit to these baths on a

Sunday morning has given us more unfeigned pleasure, and awakened within us more cheering hopes for the elevation of the people, than anything we have ever seen. The attendance here, and the characters of those who attend, are a further proof that if pure and wholesome recreations be provided for the people, at a cost within their reach, they will be so well appreciated as to become remunerative to the promoters—a fact that Mr. Clarke again and again insisted on when pointing to the crowds of youths and men pouring in on the Sabbath morning. Persons who thus commence the day by purifying their bodies will not be found at the “cat hunt” or “dog race” as the day advances. Their enjoyments will be of a purer, loftier, and more pleasing character; and from all we have seen and all we have heard, we know of no institution here or elsewhere, that is in a quiet, unobtrusive way bestrewing the pathway of the labourer with such rich, lasting, inexpensive, and abundant blessings as the Corporation baths.

CHAPTER IX.

IN order that all the phases of Liverpool life may be seen, a “Milling Crib” must be visited. There are several houses of this description in the town. They are situated in low and densely-populated districts, and during the last ten years, we are given to understand, have greatly degenerated. Time was when the town could *boast* of having the champion of England as mine host of “The Belt Tavern,” or “The Star Hotel.” “Fistic talent” was then to be met with in abundance, was also in good demand, and the “Liverpool lads” stood high on the scroll of famous pugilists. In the language of a mourner over the present state of things, “All the lights are put out, and now Liverpool is nowhere.” The public houses known as “milling cribs” are kept by men who either are or have been members of the P. R. (prize ring,) men who, having fought and nobly (?) conquered in some brutal personal struggle, are now resting from their labours “under their own vine and fig-tree,” and, judging from the gross impropriety with which they conduct their business, “none daring to make them afraid.” One of these taverns was visited shortly after “the great fight for the championship,” in expectation of hearing something of interest respecting “gallant Tom” and his “recent engagement,” or of “scientific Harry” and his last “terrible tourney.” The house is small, and in a very dirty street and neighbourhood. Scarcely a week elapses

that this street does not furnish one or more cases for the police court, some of them revealing a state of things frightful to contemplate, all of them displaying depravity and degradation disgraceful to the town, and to the authorities who allow vice thus to propagate itself. Passing a man selling trunks, bandboxes, and mousetraps, a woman selling yellow-looking cabbages and faded "pot-herbs," having been pushed aside by a drunken sweep, and hustled and cursed at by a crowd of youths who were playing at "pitch and toss" by the light of the gas-lamp, we reach a small door on a level with the footpath. On pushing this door open, we find ourselves at once in the celebrated "vaults."

The parlour in which we found ourselves was the only room in the house solely devoted to drinking. It was very dirty; the floor had not been swept or scraped for a long time, and with the dirt from men's shoes, sawdust, expectoration, and ale, which was continually being slopped, we were standing in a puddle, foul and filthy. There were three small tables with forms at the sides, and two forms attached to the wall: these, together with the recess formed by the window, were the only seat-room provided. The room was about four yards square; the walls were ornamented with portraits of "Pets of the Fancy." To speak in the slang of "the Fancy," we noticed two "plucky-looking bull terriers," with "goggle eyes," and a little "undershot," "a broken-haired whelp of a likely looking sort," with a dead rat lying beside it, two game cocks, cut and trimmed ready for fighting, but wretchedly painted, and a lithographic portrait of "Jem Corbett," a celebrated "bruiser." Jem's nose appeared to be slightly out of the perpendicular, his "gob" "any shape but the right one;" his "peepers" seemed recently to have been "in mourning," and his face was "all cocked hats." There were seven men in when we entered. One of them was engaged in reading *Bell's Life*, and on asking him if he could allow us to look at the paper for a few moments, he requested us to shut our sanguinary "trap," and "wait a bit." Coarse and disgusting as the form of expression was, it was not uttered offensively, but as the man's manner was: he evidently wished and intended to be civil. We acted on the significant advice given, and sat down with our "trap" closed.

On looking round we observed that four of the men were well-formed, muscular fellows, with an expression of great determination on their countenances, and on several of their features impressions of "ugly hits." One was dressed like a "navvie," with a clean smock. His rosy face was indicative of outdoor exercise and indoor beer drinking. There were two youths, one of whom was engaged

with the paper, the other spent his time in slipping off the form on to the filthy floor, and gathering himself up again as he best could. He was said to be "a little shaky on his pins." The room behind that in which we sat was called the kitchen. It was small, and smutty-looking, but in good keeping with all around. On the table there was a large loaf, some cinders, a couple of knives, the dust or rather ashes of tobacco, and an infant, which a woman, coarse-looking, and vulgarly attired, was supposed to be attending. The man who brought in the drink was quite the reverse of *nobody*. He was *all* body and head, his arms and legs being quite insignificant appendages. He wore a dirty blouse, and prefaced almost every sentence he uttered with a frightful expression, calling upon the Almighty to strike him dead. He was not alone in this form of speech: every man present used either a blasphemous expression, or a disgusting oath, considering, no doubt, that this rendered their language more emphatic or effective. The conversation consisted chiefly of remarks and opinions on recent fights; the character of the combatants; whether they had displayed sufficient courage, or science consistent with their position; whether such a man really meant to fight, or such another ever ought to have entered the ring. The men were frequently on the point of quarrelling with each other, as we thought, but it turned out that they were only conversing in their ordinary manner. Anything more demoniacal to look upon than the visage of these men, when excited on some "professional" point, could not easily be conceived. From their oaths and imprecations it appeared as if they considered that gladiatorial and fistic powers were the leading attributes of the god of their worship—the sublimest aspirations to which their wicked souls could rise. Discourse more abominably profane and unmanly could not have been uttered by men who, let it be remembered, pride themselves so much on their manly conduct and noble bearing.

The night was close, and the window being open to admit the air, the noise and disturbance which never ceased in the street caused the conversation to be a good deal interrupted. At this some of the men were frequently excited, and swore horribly what they would do, and where they would speedily hurl the bodies and souls of the wretched creatures outside, whose quarrels about their ill-gotten and sinful gains created the disturbance. Several times stones were hurled against the house, and we feared the windows would be broken. In this apprehension the waiter appeared to share, for he rushed outside, gnashing his teeth, clenching his fist, and threatening, in language that cannot be uttered, to wreak his vengeance on the abandoned but unfortunate disturbers of his peace. We were lis-

tening to a man entering into minute details of a dogfight which he had witnessed but a few days before, and the attention of the whole company was completely absorbed in this degrading recital, when the door of the room was suddenly thrust open, and the proprietor of the establishment staggered in, accompanied by two men. They were all cursing, and threatening some person for having done some things which were neither named nor hinted at. Their talk consisted chiefly of obscene and filthy allusions, senseless sayings, atrocious threats referring to the souls and bodies of any who differed from them, fiendlike descriptions of tortures which any of the company would speedily undergo if they would "stand up" for a few moments. Nothing appeared to be wanting to fill up the cup of these men's iniquity. They appeared to be shameless, incorrigible, irreclaimable blackguards.

The proprietor of the "vaults" was a powerfully-built man, and had he been trained in the paths of virtue instead of those of vice he would have been a noble-looking fellow. His large Roman features and well-developed form were now associated with everything disgraceful and degrading to humanity. He might have been a useful member of society, earning his bread by his own industry. He chose rather to lead an idle life, and is now a dogfighter and a pugilist, a wife beater, and a dissolute, demoralised, and depraved man. He might, from his size, nerves, and form, have made himself famous in the annals of this brutal pastime, sadly miscalled "sport," but, as the celebrated historian of the P.R. says, "He had a soft place under his left ribs," and did not "take his lickings with a relish;" therefore it is he has not fought much lately, but gratifies his vicious propensities by seeing others fight, or fighting his own dogs. This is a manly Briton—and what a comment on fighting of all sorts! "Mine host" has increased in bulk very much during the last few years, and was now slovenly attired, his shirt breast open, and from his waistcoat pocket dangled a massive gold chain. He rolled about, and eventually righted himself, and slouched down on the form. His companions were two worthless, knavish-looking fellows—one gruff-looking, snarlish, but tolerably sober; the other hirsute, rakishly dressed, but sottishly drunk. The latter introduced himself to the company by stating his name, and expressing his readiness "any minute" to "jump" the immortal part out of any of the "cooneys," a race of beings he detested, and which he said it was his determination to drive into the burning lake. Having given this information as to his person and propensities, he looks wildly round, declaring he will go, does not appear satisfied with the characters of his companions, and expresses himself in vile terms as

to what he thinks of them. His friend and the landlord both exerted themselves to induce the fellow to stay; the latter, after calling him many opprobrious names, and using a variety of adjectives to show what colour and character of "a fool" he was for entertaining the slightest uneasiness as to his safety or comfort, concluded his diabolical address by a very significant hint—"You had," said he, "six pounds; you have only spent four: you have two to spend yet, and we might as well skin *you* as any one else." This appeared to set the fellow at rest for the time. He immediately afterwards paid for a gallon of ale, which was brought in, and handed round amongst the company without any distinction. Whilst this was being done he was very anxious the company should examine his head, in order that we might see a terrible scalp wound which he had received, according to his statement, in the Kaffir war. We thought it might have been received some Sunday morning nearer to the Aintree race-course than the Cape of Good Hope. It was evidently the toemark of a native of this isle, and this drunken wretch seemed proud of the scar. "The professionals," who examined it minutely, seemed to entertain a very contemptuous opinion of so small a "dinge," as they called it, and any of them were ready to show impressions "a good deal better."

We noticed that no one here called for a glass of ale. The ale was ordered in quarts or gallons, was brought in large jugs, and handed round in small glasses. Some of the company appeared "loafers," who never paid for ale, but relied for their drink on the ability, folly, terror, drunkenness, or stupidity of persons who turned in to this filthy resort. It was a matter of surprise where the stunted and dirty waiter obtained the ale. There did not appear to be any beer engine, no tap; and from the appearance of the jug it might have been plunged into the liquid and filled in such manner. The speed with which it was brought rendered this probable. Smoking short pipes now became general, and as the ale began to take effect the noise became greater, the swearing and blasphemy more scandalous than ever. Hellish schemes were openly spoken of, and heinous crimes were more than hinted at. One graceless scoundrel entered eating bread and cheese, and requested ale to it, for which he said he would not pay, but which, nevertheless, was soon handed to him. The conversation was just then turning on work, contrasted with fighting. "The navvie," said he made his living by hard work, and did not rely on fighting or *anything else*. This sentiment, which was sneered and scoffed at by many, was taken up in a very earnest manner by the villain that was eating bread and cheese. He frowned contemptuously on the man who had uttered so execrable a

sentiment, and went on to say that any man that lived by working hard was a highly-coloured fool; that he ought, moreover, to be sent to the infernal regions, if indeed, that place was not too good for such a fellow. "I used to work," said he, "but what better was I off? *I have a lad at home that I am training, and when I get him out on the streets he will keep me and himself all right until he is sent abroad; then I must get another!*" The heartless miscreant chuckled with the cheese in his throat, and the company laughed at his infernal scheme.

The hero of the Kaffir war again became uneasy, got up, and after refusing to drink a glass of ale, said something about "drugging." The landlord immediately took this up. "Are you not Tommy's friend?" said he, "and Tommy is my friend; you need therefore not fear drugging or slugging whilst with us; no one shall hurt a hair of your head whilst you are here; I'll see to that;" and again he called upon the holy name of Him who, when on this earth, "went about doing good," and requested, with awful solemnity of purpose that if what he had then stated was not strictly true, he might become a stiffened corpse! Tommy expressed himself if possible in stronger and more horrifying terms. More ale was brought in, the revel became more fiendish. Brutal it was not—brutes could not act thus. It is only demons in human shape that could conceive or utter the hideous expressions heard on every side. The landlord staggered into the kitchen, and staggered back again, bearing in his arms an infant, and holding it up to the gaze of the revellers, he cried out, "There's breed for you! Look at it!" Tommy reached forth his arms to take the child. "Let go," said he to the father, "do you think I don't know how to handle a kid?" The child was pretty, though dirty, and almost naked, having only a small shirt or some simple garment to cover it. To see it smiling in the face of the drunken, depraved father, looking around on the countenances of the detestable creatures as they drawled out portions of a lewd song, or laughed at the filthy joke, was a picture of innocence surrounded by a deep framework of infernal depravity. At such a spectacle angels might have wept. For a moment, during the presence of the child, we thought the countenances of some of the men assumed a more pleasing expression; the rays of purity and spotless innocence reflected by the babe had touched the faces of these villains, but could not penetrate their obdurate hearts. The infant gone—the light withdrawn—they were themselves again, foul, fiendish, disgusting wretches.

One young man had now become very drunk, and the waiter suggested that it would be necessary to "double him up." This was speedily accomplished, and when he was "regularly doubled up"

he lay on the form asleep, his hat having been pressed tightly over his face. He would, no doubt, soon roll from this on to the filthy floor, and would then be spat upon. This young, drunken, crushed creature was said to be "a nice, quiet lad, with good stuff in him, but he could not feed." We were about to ask if the trial to feed him had ever been made; but recollecting the company around, and the allusion to our "trap" being closed, we said nothing, and deemed this the better part of valour, for it became evident that a storm which we had noticed gathering would speedily burst forth. The imprecations against "the cooneys" became louder and more terrible. Money was thrown down, and fighting was talked of and sought for, and amidst the devilish denunciations and awful requests impiously made to the Almighty we made our escape.

CHAPTER X.

In the last paper we saw how some of "the Fancy" beguiled their leisure hours. In order to see the character of these "manly British boxers" more fully developed, it will be necessary "to see these men at work;" and for this purpose we visited "a sparring match." There are houses at which "the science of boxing is taught at all hours," and "profound and plucky professors" earn their bread, literally, "by the sweat of their brow," in training the novice who is ambitious "to flesh his maiden mauly," or in instructing "fast young men" "how to floor the peelers." This class of sports (?) enjoys to some extent a literature of its own. "Slang" of the most extraordinary character is in general use, even amongst the educated and aristocratic supporters of "the ring." These men would be horrified if it were stated in their hearing that one ruffian had struck another a violent blow in the mouth or nose, causing the blood to gush forth in a frightful manner; but they "enjoy it rather" when it is said "he got home beautifully on Bob's sucker, and drew an unmistakeable supply of the ruby;" or, "he popped in his left very neatly on Sam's smeller, and opened up a fresh paint pot;" or, "he cleverly reached his kisser, and turned on the tap from the darky's bung-hole." So general has this form of expression become, that the "retreats of the Fancy," at least those of a respectable (?) character, always append to the advertisements this significant sentence—"The whole literature of the ring kept at the bar?" The specimens given will show the necessity for this, and explain our motive for introducing such phraseology.

Sparring matches are got up nominally for the benefit of some pugilist, but really for the benefit of landlords, who in most cases have a youth in hand that they support and "back" to fight; they therefore hold "a sparring match" now and then, to raise funds to supply the fighter with food or get him into training, and so prepare him for a "gallant, scientific, fair, manly, stand-up mill." The appeals that are made to the public by these pugilistic professors, in advertisements and through the press, exhibit great ingenuity, and not unfrequently display literary ability. It is lamentable to see undoubted talent thus prostituted. A sparring match was recently introduced thus:—"Now is the time or never for all Englishmen to join heart and hand to prevent their truly national sport from being put down and utterly extinguished—the foreigner's *stiletto* substituted for the English *fist*!" In another announcement, speaking of the pugilist whose benefit was about to "come off"—"A——, through unforeseen difficulties, has got into limbo; and as he has a wife and eight children, of course he is extremely anxious on the subject of the future. We do trust that none of his *brethren in arms* will neglect this call of charity. A gamer or better bit of stuff for his weight never peeled than the *beneficiaire*." And as a further inducement to visitors, it is added, "In this classical retreat there is everything in abundance to recruit the strength, cheer the spirits, and ease the heart. Lessons in boxing at all times. Gloves provided."

The sparring match at which we were present was announced as a "Grand scientific display of fistic talent," for the benefit of a Liverpool celebrity who had just been engaged in a fight which ended in "a draw," that is, both men were so horribly beaten and bruised by each other that the umpire could not decide which of them was the victor. The admission to this "sparring treat" was—"Front seats, 1s.; back seats, 6d.; to commence at seven o'clock prompt." The house where it was held is noted for all the sports of the fancy—fighting, running, ratting, dog fighting, badger baiting, and their concomitant vicious practices. The squalor and filth to be met with in the street and neighbourhood are a commentary on our boasted sanitary progress and "improved dwellings for the working classes." Beershops and brothels, gin palaces and gin drinkers, wretched women, giddy girls, bloated bullies and black-guard boys, semi-nude outcasts, and mud-loving, mischief-making manikins, here abound. The houses are the oldest, and but one degree removed from the filthiest, in the town. We reached the place at seven o'clock "prompt." It was low and dirty looking. We entered a small parlour, in which we found half-a-dozen young

men, whose appearance at once pronounced them to be "professionals," and whose conversation proved them to be so. On inquiring if the sparring match had commenced, we were told, "It is time enough; the coves very seldom turn up till about eight o'clock." A man came forward from the kitchen, and enquired if we had tickets. He was prepared to sell, and we purchased for the front seats. One or two young men from a foundry sauntered in; they bought tickets, smoked short pipes, drank ginger beer or ale, chatted with "the bruisers" about fighting in general, and the late fight near Birmingham in particular. The landlord was a stiff-set, sinewy, wiry man, civil and obliging in manner. He kept the conversation well up, and appeared to be "well up" himself on all matters appertaining to his profession and practice. He told the company of a singular match which he expected would come off. Two men were matched to fight, walk, and run for £50 a-side—to fight on Tuesday, walk on Thursday, and run one hundred yards on Friday. This was looked upon by the company as a remarkable feat, "such a thing as never was before nor ever would be again." There appeared to be several men present who had nothing to drink. They were fighting men, destitute of cash—some of them were almost destitute of clothes, and the landlord explained that "the poor coves were out of feather" and "nearly on the stones."

A man came in who treated the company to half-a-gallon of ale, and as the landlord put it on the table, he said, "Come now, chaps, this will help you to moult," which we supposed to be another and probably more expressive form of saying it would cheer their spirits. When nearly an hour had elapsed, and the company had received several additions, we were asked to "come up stairs to the sparring saloon; it's cooler and more comfortable." Of this invitation we speedily availed ourselves. The sparring saloon was also used as the dog-fighting and rat-killing saloon—the "rat pit," as it is called, having been taken asunder and placed in the corner of the room. The place was spacious, the room of the next house on the same floor having been taken in, as we were told, "so as to give us proper room for our work." The ceiling was very low, and the place had a close unhealthy odour. The windows were speedily opened, and we obtained better air and a view of the street. The gambols of some drunken sailors on the opposite side created amusement, and helped to while away the time. The walls of the room were literally covered with portraits of celebrated pugilists, pedestrians, rowers, dogs, rat-killing matches, and a large engraving of "the great mill between Broom and Hannan for £1000 a-side," with a key to it. If these portraits of British boxers could be relied on, a

collection of more brutal looking beings we never saw. The company spent their time in examining the engravings, and manifested nothing like dissatisfaction at the delay. Most of the young men were decent-looking mechanics, and walked about the room quite as seriously as if they had been waiting to hear a scientific or instructive lecture. About twenty persons had now assembled, and a little bustle in the corner of the room where the pugilists had assembled gave indication that business would speedily commence. A young man very smartly dressed entered the room, and was most cordially greeted by the boxers. His hair was cropped very close, and from his conversation and his frequent allusion to "bagging the bobbies," it was evident to what class he belonged, and how his showy dress had been obtained. He amused the men very much by a recital of some of his hairbreadth escapes.

It was close on nine o'clock when the gloves were brought in, and two men stripped to "set to." The poor creatures had little difficulty in stripping. One of them was the tall young man whom we had seen at the "Milling Crib," "shaky on his pins," and afterwards "regularly doubled up." The other was a stiff-set fellow, of determined aspect, and as an old man by us observed, "snake-headed and flabby." When the gloves (which were filthy looking articles) had been properly secured on the men's hands, they walked into the centre of the room, shook hands, threw themselves into a variety of fighting attitudes, and began to strike each other with such earnestness as to call forth requests from the spectators to "Keep out," and "Take it easy," "Don't be so savage," &c. The tall youth said his "crabshells were too slippery;" he therefore took off an indifferent pair of shoes and displayed stockings which were filthy in the extreme, but destitute of heels, and thus relieved, he again faced his opponent. They struck each other very savagely; even the men by us who appeared thoroughly to understand the science, complained of their ferocity, and considered it was not sparring but fighting. After beating each other about the head and breast until they were exhausted, they would walk about the room or sit down for a few minutes, until they regained sufficient breath to enable them to beat each other still further. As they warmed with their work, and administered what were considered effective blows, the audience, on the call of one or other of the professionals in waiting, applauded. After about twenty minutes, the order was given to the boxers to "rally it off," and we then witnessed what the old man by us called "nice papping, and a very decent spirt for young 'uns." A coarse-looking fellow, with high cheek bones, large mouth, flat nose, low forehead, a massive neck, now walked

into the middle of the floor, and throwing down some coppers, said, "Now, chaps, tip them up some coppers to get them a gill; they are both out of work." Several of the spectators in response to this appeal threw coppers on the floor. As soon as the slim youth was dressed he picked up all the money and left the room. On inquiring for his opponent, whom we missed immediately on the conclusion of "the rally," it was said "the poor cove was sick in the yard."

It was a matter of surprise to us that the celebrated man for whose benefit this spectacle was got up never made himself known, if, indeed, he was present at all; and further, that there was no person to direct or control the extent or nature of the enjoyments provided. It did not surprise us much to find that we had been deceived in paying a shilling for a front seat, when there was no distinction between front or back; neither were we astonished at the meanness of the stout, able young men, who might obtain an honest livelihood by some industrial occupation, making beggars of themselves, or battering their bodies to gratify a vicious and depraved taste. These things were not to be wondered at, seeing that it was "old English and manly sport!"

After a short cessation of hostilities two men "peeled," and had the gloves fastened on their hands. One was called P——, the other "Johnny," "a noted fist of the Liverpool ring." P—— was the man who had come forward to solicit alms for the former combatants; "Johnny" was sottish, savage-looking, unshaved and filthy. The portion of shirt he had on appeared to be held together by dirt. After shaking hands, they looked earnestly at each other and began to *fight*. When two or three blows had been given, it appeared "Johnny" was drunk and could not stand. P—— waited nearly ten minutes for him to come round. In the meantime a tall, well-built, healthy-looking young fellow entered the room, and became the "observed of all observers." On enquiry we found this "Topping Miller" had a short time before, in a pugilistic encounter, *killed* his opponent: hence the interest excited by his appearance. "The Hero of the Redan" or of "a hundred fights" could not have excited greater wonder and astonishment than did this man-killer amongst this gathering. Seeing the men idle, and "Johnny" "shaking himself together," this great hero called out "Time," and, looking contemptuously at "Johnny," he told him to "go in." There was now some terrible hitting before these brutes satisfied themselves or their "brethren in arms." They struck each other as hard as they could, wherever they could. They grinned fiendishly at each other. "Johnny" sprang tiger-like on P——, and sobered himself by such means. After a few rounds

of this sort the men were ordered to "rally it off," when another collection was made. The man-killer threw down fourpence, and called on the audience "not to be ashamed to fetch out the coppers, for 'Johnny' was 'hard up.'" The money appeal was not warmly responded to, energetically as it was made.

The disgraceful exhibition on the part of "Johnny" drew forth from the spectators many severe strictures on his conduct and character. A mild-spoken young man who sat beside us, and who appeared to know the whole of the men present, regretted very much "to see Johnny cut up so badly," adding, with a sigh, "He was at one time a very pretty fighter, hard as steel, and a glutton at milling; but he's lazy, and has ruined himself with lushing." Herein may be seen the whole life of the boxer epitomised. Yet even this would fail to warn many young men that surrounded us, and whom we noticed so deeply interested in the manner every "hit" was given. The collection did not prove very successful, and the professionals, as is generally the case, had no desire to "set to" for the fun of the thing. They had passed this stage, and would now only "mill for money." One of them walked into the middle of the floor, and holding up "the gloves" in a tempting manner, said, in his most persuasive tone, addressing the company, "Is none of you coves inclined to have a set-to? Your'e very shy to-night. Get up, some of you; there are chaps here that can give you a wrinkle, and put you up to a move or two, if your'e short." But no one responded to this eloquent appeal. We learned that it is quite common for amateurs to "show" on such occasions, and by this means "get their hand in." They spar here for fun, and are afterwards found fighting in earnest, or for a livelihood. The professionals in this class, as amongst others, are ever ready to puff up, spur on, or flatter the vanity of young men already vain enough of their ability. Thus are weak-minded, lazily-inclined youths led to adopt as a profession, what they begin as a pastime. Look at "Johnny" a short time ago—he *was an amateur*. He put on the gloves at a sparring match to save the bones of a professional, and to gratify his own depraved taste, and he is now what many amateurs around us will become—a drunken, dissolute, degraded scoundrel.

The audience had been gradually on the increase, and had now become large by the influx of a crew of sailors, out for a spree. They were carefully waited on by the professionals, and "stood something stiff" for "Johnny." We were surprised to see several respectable-looking young men turn into this dirty saloon, devoting their hours to such degrading pastimes. The landlord and a very loquacious waiter carried round large jugs and cans of ale, and filled

up the glasses as required, charging twopence per glass, of which there might be five to the quart. The ale was said to be "worse nor anything." Twenty minutes elapsed before hands could be obtained for another "set to." After a deal of pulling out, punching, and persuading, a nice-made young man, rather respectable-looking, was induced to get up and strip, in order to face the tall youth who "had good stuff in him but could not feed." The coppers which had been begged after the first mill had obtained for him a gill or two, which was clearly indicated by his flushed cheek and glassy eye. Here he was, ready again to pummel any one, or let any one pummel him, in the hope that when it was over there would be a good collection. These fellows "took their licking with a relish," and the applause of the audience was very general. We had seen enough of such an exhibition, and whilst these men were engaged we left the room, passing on our walk through a crowd of half-drunken, filthy, blasphemous wretches, who had assembled inside and outside to witness the grand, scientific, and manly display of fistic talent.

CHAPTER XI.

"THE Canine Fancy" form a large and important class, and have several beer and public houses in this town devoted to their peculiar recreations—recreations which, by any right-thinking man, must be pronounced degrading in every sense. At these *licensed* resorts you may rely on seeing any evening "a good show of dogs," or witness "some beautiful ratting," and see both "young and old dogs" display their "extraordinary powers" by killing a few dozen rats in so many seconds "for a bottle of wine and a supper for six." You may also, and in addition to this, see "badger bating," see dog after dog drag a badger through a sort of tube, amid the yells of dogs and the shouts of the fancy. This, too, is called a "good old English sport," is indulged in frequently and openly, is attended numerously, and is supported with great earnestness by many who look upon themselves, and are looked upon by others, as respectable men. It has not been the least painful portion of our disagreeable task to visit these canine taverns. The scenes to be met with are terribly vicious, the language indulged in by the frequenters frightfully vile, "the sports" shockingly disgusting, and some of the sportsmen unscrupulously savage. Harrowing and revolting as the scenes are, it is right that all should know the men that surround them, and what it is that goes to make up the enjoyments of the people. And those who live if not *by*, yet still *beside*,

such a state of things ought to know what the men are like who indulge in such disgraceful pastimes.

Having resolved to witness "the sports of the canine fancy," we visited one of their "most respectable houses" on a Saturday evening, a little after nine o'clock. It is situated in an old street, of very questionable character, though the name is of apostolic origin. To reach the house we have to pass gaudily-decorated ginshops, the doors of which are thronged with shoeless and tattered looking men and women passing in and out. Some are drunk and maudlin; others are fiercely denouncing or shamefully swearing. Into these palaces mothers are carrying their infants, dirty and crying, and will no doubt check their cries by a draught of the deadly liquor. We pass many sailors in company with very stout women, whose demeanour is indecent and whose language is unchaste. We pass men selling boot-laces, boys selling blacking, women selling oysters, girls selling "staylaces four yards for a penny." We pass a blind man fiddling, and two young girls singing a ballad. They are surrounded by a crowd of men who are deeply interested in "the fate of the immortal John Mitchell." Amidst the cries of fish for sale, "fourpence a pound," and the noise of a street brawl, which ends in a woman being taken into custody, we reach the tavern.

The first room we entered was about four yards square, had seats all round, and two tables. Eighteen persons, chiefly young men, were present. Most of them had dogs lying or sitting at their feet; others had dogs in their arms; all were engaged in drinking, smoking, talking of dogs and dogfighting, or kindred and equally vicious amusement. Not able to procure a seat, we passed on to the next room. This was smaller, contained the bar, and had round it seats, all of which were occupied. On the table we noticed a small, dirty-looking, ugly-shaped dog, which was said to be "a brindled pup, eight weeks old, of a good sort, bursting with breed." The men examined it very minutely, opened its mouth, pinched its tail, lifted it by the ears, all of which it bore without any signs of discontent, and it was therefore pronounced "to have something in it, and if it was only half as good as its father, it would prove a tough customer." We passed into the back parlour. The company here appeared more quiet and respectable, and we sat down. The room was decorated with portraits of dogs of all breeds; the place was clean, and the visitors equally so. The men were quite a superior class to those noticed in the other room, and we were surprised how they found it either pleasant or profitable to spend their time in such a place. They appeared hard-working, industrious men, some of them mechanics. They were evidently neither drunkards nor sots.

They sat here conversing quietly, most of them smoking, several of them sipping at glasses of ginger beer. There was a carter present, a stout, rosy-faced, pleasant-looking man. He had with him a large dog, which we were told was "a broken-haired terrier," the pluck of which was doubted. The owner had, therefore, "just dropped in to try him, and give him a turn with any dog that might turn up; or, if that won't do, I'll give him a run at the badger." This dog, his birth, parentage, performances, and appearance, formed the subject of conversation for some time. One man liked his head, another thought it too long; one thought he might "scratch well," another that he was "faulty," and would "hanch;" but on one point all were agreed—it was, that the dog ought to be tried, and they would like to see it tried. Wishes were thereupon expressed that "Charley" would turn up with his "Pippin," or that "Bill" would come in with "Jerry."

"Bill" did come in directly afterwards, but, much to the disappointment of all, he did not bring "Jerry," and was therefore asked to go home and bring the dog, so that they might have "a turn." Bill replied, using many oaths, "You must think me a great fool to bring the dog out after I had given him his supper and put him to bed. Do you think I'm like some fellows as has no feeling for a dog?" This was considered unanswerable, and "a turn" with Jerry was for this evening out of the question. Hearing the man speak so feelingly of his dog, and manifest such care for its well-being, we were led to notice him more closely. He appeared to have been engaged in some foundry, had certainly not washed himself since he left work, and from his appearance might not have done so for a month past. In this respect he was in striking contrast with the men around. He was mild-spoken in manners, but used foul language; he was stiff-set, bullet-headed, and bloated-looking. He chewed tobacco very fiercely, and the usual concomitants of this filthy habit followed. There did not appear to be much "sport" getting under way. In reply to inquiries on the subject, we were told that "Saturday night is not a good time for fun. The most of the men have 'tin' on that night, and therefore like a sup of beer and a chat, or 'a quiet game of cards.' Besides, none of the landlords care much about dog-fighting, ratting, or badger-baiting when 'the coves' have money to spend in drink. On other nights, when there is no tin, or very little, the sports go on first-rate!" We learnt, also, that the proprietors of canine taverns generally keep fighting dogs, for the purpose of accommodating and obliging their patrons; so that the courage of a dog can be put to

the test and its prowess ascertained almost at any time—certainly on the shortest notice. There are canine clubs established at some of the houses, where weekly payments of twopence or threepence are made by “the fancy.” The funds are allowed to accumulate until there is sufficient to pay for a supper for the members; and on each meeting of the club “a good show of dogs” takes place. From the rules of one of these clubs we see “that any member neglecting to attend every Tuesday evening, at seven o’clock, and bring his dog with him, shall be fined threepence.” The greatest ambition to which these members of the fancy aspire is to have “a plucky dog”—a dog that will “give as well as take,” that will face anything, or tear any other dog to pieces in the smallest possible space of time and in the most horrible manner. There is no sympathy shown or expressed for any dog unless he be “downright game.”

A pale haggard-looking woman came in. She proved to be “Bill’s wife.” She entreated him to go home. Scowling on her and looking fierce, he cursed her for a fool, telling her to go away and he would be there directly. With a heavy sigh she turned mournfully away; but Bill called her back, saying, “Did you hear Jerry stir?” She replied that she did not, and went out. Bill then tells the company that he is afraid of “Jerry;” that his pluck is giving way, or his health is failing; adding, with great earnestness, “I walked him to Edge-hill Church before I gave him his supper, and I gave him some castor oil last night; but if he does not fight better on Monday than he did last Wednesday, I’ll rip him up!” The language used to express the sincerity of this threat, and the intention to put it into execution, were disgustingly vulgar. In ten minutes the wife returned and asked him to come home, as his supper was spoiling.

At this second visitation of the woman he had pledged himself to cherish and succour, he became dreadfully excited, and threatened her with the most awful visitation if she did not at once “cut home.” The language used to his wife by this savage, in the presence of other men, was more disgustingly offensive and indecent than anything we ever heard uttered in the filthiest den of iniquity. Yet this fellow could walk his dog to Edge-hill Church for an airing, before giving it supper and putting it to bed. He threatens to ill-treat and abuse his wife—in all probability will do so—because she quietly asked him to come home! He will look after the health and training of his dog, and neglect those of his wife or children. This is one of the fancy—a choice representative of a large class to be met with at canine taverns, and

whose propensities and passions are gratified and indulged by the existence of such disgraceful *licensed* houses.*

The landlord, who has been busy in the bar and in the other rooms, now comes in. He is a pleasant spoken, and, so far as his peculiar business is concerned, an intelligent man. He can tell you the pedigree of performances of any celebrated dogs, has trained and possessed many good dogs himself, is "well up" in all the sports of the fancy, and is as ready to talk of a "mill" as a "ratting match," and more ready to get up either than talk about them, but likes to do everything "in a quiet way." He keeps good dogs now, also a badger, and has always on hand a good stock of excellent rats, which he supplies at reasonable prices, and the use of the rat-killing pit gratis. Rats are sold at 3d. or 4d. each, according to size, a considerable reduction being made if a quantity be taken. Whilst we were here a youth came in for some rats. He wanted to try his pup. The landlord replied to the inquiry as to whether he had any, "Indeed I have, some of the finest you ever saw—real beauties; it is seldom you get the look of such rats. They were caught in the market last night, and every one of them would weigh a pound." The youth says he is disposed to take a few, but he must have "the stingers taken out." The host thereupon coolly walks to the cage and takes out a rat, handling it as indifferently as if it had been a kitten. In one hand he holds the neck of the rat between his finger and thumb, whilst he passes the other into his side pocket and produces a pair of pincers. With these, talking away all the time, he proceeds to *tear out or break off the teeth of the rat*, and, this done, he passes it over to the youth to take away and try his pup with. This is called "taking out the stingers." To hear the creature

* If proof were wanted of the disgraceful manner in which prize-fighters treat their wives, it will be found in the following paragraph, which we cut from the *Manchester Guardian*:—

BRUTAL CASE OF WIFE BEATING.—Yesterday (Wednesday), at the Barnsley Court-house, William Ogley, a person well known in the prize ring, and late a prize fighter, but who is now settled down as the landlord of a public house at Tankersley, was charged with committing a brutal assault upon his wife, Ann Ogley. The case was laid under the act for the prevention of aggravated assaults upon women and children. It appeared from the evidence that on the 19th instant the defendant went to Sheffield. On his returning home, about eight o'clock in the evening, and being told by his wife that his supper was ready, he seized the saucepan, which contained a quantity of potatoes and hot water, and struck her a violent blow with it, which rendered her insensible. He then took up a besom shaft and beat her most unmercifully, until her body was one complete mass of bruises and discolouration, from which she has since suffered. The bench characterised the assault as of a most brutal character, and committed the prisoner to Wakefield house of correction for six months' hard labour.

squeal, and then *hear its teeth fall on the flags of the floor*; to see the coolness with which it is done, and the calmness and cold-blooded indifference with which such a revolting spectacle is viewed by the spectators; to hear the chuckle at the agony of the rat by the youth who is to pocket it, and see his features brighten up when he thinks how his "little pup, six weeks old," will tear the creature to pieces—to see and hear these things gives an insight into some of the sports of the "canine fancy!"

From hints dropped and "information received," we learn that a dog-fight is to come off shortly between two greatly celebrated dogs, for £10 a side. This excites a good deal of speculation, and wagers are laid on "the event." But dog-fighting, particularly prize-fighting with dogs, is spoken of with extreme caution in mixed assemblies; the persons present are carefully scrutinised and considered "safe" before any business of this nature is transacted. This, we learn, arises from the efforts that have from time to time been made by the police to put an end to this "manly and elevating" British pastime. The magistrates have also gone so far as to threaten the withdrawal of the license from any house where it is known that dog-fighting is practised. A knowledge of this on the part of the proprietors of canine taverns has led to the secrecy with which they now conduct these operations. The interference of the magistracy and the police is sorely felt by those greatly oppressed British sportsmen, and one of them lamented his condition to us in these terms—"What with driving a fellow from fighting his dog in the fields or in a yard to fighting it in a house, I don't know what things will come to; *now* a fellow can't fight his dog even in a house in *ever so quiet a way*, but an infernal 'peeler' comes and shoves his smeller in. A swell may ride his horse to death in the face of day, may break its neck or leg, and kill it on the field at a steeple-chase or race-course, whilst hundreds of other swells are looking on and enjoying the sport, yet nothing is said or done; but if a poor cove gives his dog a turn for half an hour—it may be only for fun, or may be to keep him in health—a lobster will come and collar him, and away he goes to quod, and the beak says, 'Oh you brutal fellow, this is dreadful sport. You are a vile, disgraceful wretch, and must pay twenty shillings and costs.' These here things is what disgusts me with the law!" Coarsely as these sentiments were uttered, some truth is to be found in them, and all in authority, when thinking of these matters, would do well to take the advice given to us, and "get the kernel out of that nut!"

As we left the house we stayed a few minutes in the first room to notice a large party of young men playing cards. Many of them had

dogs in their arms whilst so engaged. The men were all very dirty, and some of them drunk. The dogs were engaged in some instances in cleaning their master's hands, and in one instance we noticed "the brindled pup" cleaning its master's face! It had got one side nicely done, but the process of cleaning was much interrupted by the progress of the game at cards, for now and again the dog received a blow on the snout, with the words "drop it;" yet the brute, foiled in its attempts at the face, returned to the hand, getting at the face again during "the deal."

We met two policemen at the door as we left the house. Would it not be within the scope of their duties, in a neighbourhood where they "walk two abreast," to enter a public house and interrupt the pastimes of youths playing cards for half gallons of ale? Gaming, which in every instance leads to crime, ought not to be permitted where the remedy is so simple; and if the purification of the morals and manners of the people comes within the duties of magistrates, why is this well-known vice not checked? Magistrates are their brothers' keepers—deny it as they may.

CHAPTER XII.

DURING the visits to the "Canine Tavern," described in the last chapter, we learned "that a dog-fight for £10 a-side" was to come off on the Tuesday following, and as this demoralising pastime presents attractions for and employs the leisure hours of great numbers of the working population in this as well as other towns—nay, is indeed looked upon by hundreds as an amusement—we deem it proper, notwithstanding the revolting nature of the details, to lay a few facts on dog-fighting before the public. Not a week elapses in Liverpool in which several dog-fights do not take place, some more or less openly, many, particularly those involving large sums of money, strictly private. All persons present at the prize fights are supposed to be confederates, or to some extent have a pecuniary interest in the result. We saw, with much surprise, in the public prints, within the last few weeks, that one "respectable aleseller" of the town challenged the dog of another "nobby tavernkeeper" to fight for a certain sum. The weight of the dogs was fixed, and the money was said to be "ready any time." This fight, as we have already announced, was stopped by the police last Monday, and the gathering assembled to witness it fully corroborated all we advanced, yet the promoters of this savage and brutal sport (?) enjoy the privilege of being licensed by her Majesty's board of in-

land revenue to supply her Majesty's liege subjects with "beer and tobacco." It would appear from this public challenge that dog-fighting is about to be more openly practised, and we may look forward to the time when the columns of the sporting journals will be devoted to the details of the dog-fight, with the number of rounds fought, the appearance of the combatants before and after the fight, "the points" made by each brute, and the "glorious future which awaits such gallant achievements," just as we now see space devoted to men fighting, &c. And why should not this be so in the age of progress?

When a fight between two dogs is arranged, the money or a deposit down, and the weight at which the dogs are to "come to the scratch" fixed, the dogs are said to "go into training," and their owners set very industriously to work to bring out the full powers of the animals, in order to secure the money to be contended for and protect their backers. It must be borne in mind that the money staked is frequently the result of subscription, and many a poor fellow who earns his wages by wielding the sledge-hammer at the forge risks a portion of them on a dog-fight. He has "a fancy," and, after the manner of the horse-race betting man, he looks well to the pedigree, finds that "the dog is of a good stock, and ought to fight, and nothing else;" and therefore will starve his wife and children "to support his fancy." As the day for the fight draws near the excitement at the Canine Tavern becomes intense. The state of the odds is regularly quoted, and men with serious faces talk of "getting a little on at three to five," or "doing the homœopathic trick a tevens," with all that air of legitimate business which you may see in Brunswick-street when corn is up, or on the flags when cotton is rising. To look at the men in the tavern, no one could conceive the horrid means they adopt to make or lose their money. They talk in the coolest manner of fighting their dogs, or of dogs being killed in the pit; but there is one thing you never hear them name publicly, "the trysting place." You never hear them state the hour or house at which the fight will take place. This is learned in a quiet way. The tavern at which the fight is fixed to come off may be known the night before the fight at most of the sporting houses. You go to the host, and "he tips the whereabouts." In Liverpool the risk that landlords run in holding dog-fights in their houses is said to be very great; therefore the landlords of sporting houses good-naturedly undertake the risk in turns. Besides this, there is a charge made for admission to witness the fight. This is done (so the dog-fighters told us) to cover the risk, or "help the poor cove to pay the fine, if he should be nailed." The time chosen is generally

early in the morning, when the police are going off duty; and we were told that "*Sunday was a very good time.*" It would appear from what we saw and heard that dog-fights in the town are as common on Sunday as man-fights "up the shore," or dog-races at the "Old Swan." Ministers address the working classes at Windsor fields or in the Concert Hall and Park Theatre on Sunday afternoons: the dog-fighters set them an example of industry, and begin their work "ere it is yet day," always mustering, to use their own phrase, "in great force, and no mistake."

The "dog-fight" about to be described took place in this town, not long ago, on a Tuesday morning. There is something very revolting in the idea of rising early on a beautiful summer's morning, and walking into the foulest and filthiest portion of the town, to look on two dogs tearing each other to pieces, to gratify the vicious propensities of their owners and a crowd of interested spectators. But to see Liverpool life it must be done.

It has just gone five o'clock. Working men are on the move to their daily toil. We notice that several on their way "drop in" to the grog shops, which are standing open like so many man traps, "to have a drain," as they term it. There are several coffee stalls as we pass, and at these we notice that workmen stop and get a bun and a cup of coffee for a penny. We see spring carts laden with carpenters, who, in these miserable days of free trade and ill-paid labour, have to be carried to their work. It may be supposed that the wages of shipwrights being so small (not above seven shillings a day), they are compelled to live poor, and therefore have not strength to *walk* to work. They look very hearty, notwithstanding the injustice inflicted upon them by free trade, of which they were and are such bitter opponents. As we get into the centre of the town, the stream of working men widens, and we are regaled with the fragrance from the short pipes under way. We cannot help contrasting our object with the object of the passers. Indulging in a gloomy view of humanity, we reach the street where the fight is to take place. The riot, of which this street was the scene last night, has left some tokens in the broken windows of several houses, and portions of plates and dishes are lying about. There is one of the houses open. An old man is sitting at the door, trying to obtain what in this street he never can get—fresh air. He tells us "there was only four taken to quod." As yet we see no dog-fighters about. Presently two men come up the street. They look stealthily around "to see if the Bobbies are about." Finding "the coast clear," they go to the tavern door, and by giving a peculiar knock, which is understood by the landlord, they are admitted. Having

got in, all is said now to be "comfortable;" but before going up stairs the money is collected. Sixpence each is generally paid, but several men pay one shilling, and "think that cheap enough." The close smell of the room, after the debauch of the previous night, is very offensive, but we hear no complaint, all the visitors are so intent on the dogs. Both dogs have arrived, and are being rubbed down and prepared for the fight. The preliminaries require some time to arrange. There must be an umpire appointed and a referee chosen. The dogs must be weighed, and the owners of the dogs "toss for scratch." About thirty men are now present: some of them appear nervously excited. There is a talk of "beaks about," or all not being "safe." We hear the growling of the brutes as they get a glimpse of each other below, and immediately there is a rush up stairs, the men carrying up the dogs.

The room is a filthy place, filled with men in good keeping. The "pit" in which the dogs fight is formed with boards, the lower portion of which is lined with tin, or in some cases zinc. It is about two and a half or three yards square, is thirty inches high, and is so arranged that it can be taken to pieces at a moment's notice and put aside, or more frequently into a closet which is at hand. At two of the corners small seats are placed, for the men who are in the pit attending to the dogs. "The scratch" is formed by a string being placed across the centre of the pit, or in some cases it is formed by a chalk mark on the floor. The chalk mark, however, is liable to be rubbed out by the struggles of the creatures, and more frequently by their blood. The men hold up their dogs until the order is given, when one of the men, according to the result of the toss, takes his dog to the scratch; that is, holding it by the neck, he drags it to the cord in the middle of the pit. When he looses his hold the brute runs at its opponent, which up to this time is being held in one of the opposite corners, and the worrying then begins. On this occasion the dogs were similar in weight—twenty-eight pounds; one was brindled, and the other fawn-coloured. We have their names, and know the names of their owners. The fawn-coloured dog had the advantage in age, being much younger, and was immediately backed by the company for sums which we wondered how men in their positions could ever get together. The dogs "did not get hold well" at first, but "did better" as they "got on a bit"—that is, the men were not satisfied because the creatures did not tear each other sufficiently. When a dog is thrown, or at some other particular crisis during the engagement, which we could not well discover in consequence of the crowding round the pit, the signal is given to take the dogs off, and they are loosed. Their mouths are then

washed and sponged out, their bodies are rubbed over with some sort of liquid that has turpentine in it, their ears are rubbed and pulled, their muscles attended to in the same manner, and thus is the time spent until the signal is again given for them "to go to the scratch." The growling of the brutes at each other—the cursing of the men at each other and at the dogs—the shouts of delight when the dog which an enthusiastic looker-on is backing obtains an advantage—the crushing to the edge of the pit—the heat of the close room—the sound of money changing hands—the demoniacal expression of the men in the pit, and the terrible excitement of all around, carry the mind far away from happy England in the nineteenth century, and we look in vain for any scene amongst the degrading exhibitions or pastimes of savage nations, at all to compare with what surrounds us, and which takes place in Liverpool almost every day.

But a few moments elapse when "time" is called, and again the dogs run at each other, and growling, gnawing, twisting, tearing, biting, writhing, and wrestling, they go through another round. To dwell on such a scene would be simply loathsome, and we forbear. Enough has been said to show the horrors of this inhuman sport, and it therefore only remains to state the result. The young dog, after fighting three-quarters of an hour, was declared the victor; the other, it was seen, had no chance, and the curious notions of justice which these dog-fighters have, led the owner of the old dog to "give in." Had both dogs been of the same age, in all probability they would have had to fight until one or other had been killed in the pit, or until one had turned tail and "would not scratch." There was great interest manifested by all around to see the dogs when they were taken out of the pit, and the general remark was—that "they were not cut much, and that it was a pretty fight—stiffish for the time."

The principal director of this horrible sport was a celebrated pugilist, whose name we see has been mentioned in connection with the great £50 match which was fixed to come off last Monday. This man entered heartily and earnestly into the work, and tossed his money about from hand to hand in the most indifferent manner. When the fight was over, rattling his gold chain and jingling the sovereigns in his pocket, he called out, "All hands to the beer barrel," and there was then a general rush downstairs for ale. We presumed the stakes were given up, for there was abundance of cash to spend. The revel now began in earnest, and during the smoking and drinking many instances were related of dogs being killed in the pit. Indeed, only a few days before this, there had been a fight, which ended in one dog dying in the pit, and the other dying very

shortly afterwards; but, strange to say, the dead dog, it was said, won the fight. Won after it was killed? We could not understand this, but it was explained thus. "Tip" fights "Jerry." In the last round "Tip" is killed, and "dies in his corner." It is, we will suppose, "Jerry's" turn to go to the scratch. If, when he is taken to the scratch, he does not run at the dead dog, he loses the stakes, and the dead dog is declared the victor. Such is one of the laws of "the fancy." The supply of drink that was forthcoming on this occasion appeared to be inexhaustible. Men who came out to see the fight, and then go to their work, remained, on the invitation of the director of this orgie, drinking the whole of the morning. At noon we again passed the place; drunken men were lolling about the door—one was being led home by his son, a youth of ten or twelve years of age; the house was completely upset by the carnival of the morning; wives would no doubt be abused, children ill-treated and starved; men would be still further depraved and hardened in their viciousness; homes would be rendered miserable, hearts rendered callous, society degraded, and the town disgraced. But still the monsters of iniquity revelled on, glorying in the fact of the dog-fight.

It appears to many incredible that scenes such as we have described can take place in a town like Liverpool, watched over as it is by an active body of police, and a large and active bench of magistrates. Thoughtful men say, "Surely the magistrates do not know." "Why not write to them privately; many of them are earnest philanthropists, and take an active part in anything that promotes the moral and social welfare of the people." Yes, we know this; but yet the fact remains. *The police do know* of the existence of these houses—they know that canine taverns are receptacles for stolen goods, that convicted thieves and daring burglars are there to be met with, that they are hotbeds of vice, hiding-places for villainous characters—yet the landlords have the licenses renewed, and thus iniquity thrives. We boast of our superiority as a nation—of our progress in good of all sorts—yet neither local nor national legislators appear to take one effective step for the suppression of vicious and degrading sports. See what Brother Jonathan has done in the state of New York. It has recently been enacted that in future every person "who shall set on foot, or instigate, or move to, to carry on, or promote, or engage in, as a witness, umpire, or judge, or do anything in furtherance of any premeditated fight or contention between persons with their fists, or any fight between game birds, or game cocks, or dogs, or bulls, or between dogs and rats, or dogs and badgers, or any other animals shall be liable to imprisonment and fine to the extent of one thousand dollars."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE manner in which Saturday evenings are spent by the working-classes exercises a powerful influence on their social position and prospects. Well-meaning and sincere, because disinterested, friends of the workman see this; hence the efforts which are made in a few instances to provide rational recreation or innocent amusements. If Saturday evening be rationally enjoyed, the chances are that the Sabbath will be righteously and profitably spent. Saturday evening spent in the singing saloon, "free and easy," "harmonic gathering," or "amateur glee club," generally results in Sunday broils, Sunday beer-bibbing, family discord, and social degradation. It is only natural that after a week of toil man should seek for some recreation. He works from day to day, and if he be not blessed with a thirst for knowledge, and have not the advantages of a good education, he anxiously looks forward to that period of time when his week is up, his wages paid, and an hour or two of leisure at his disposal. We know for a fact that the thought of Saturday night and its enjoyment constitutes the only gleam of sunshine reflected on the path of hundreds of toiling artisans. To see how this time, so earnestly looked and longed for, is spent, will go far to show us what is the life of the labourer, his pleasures, practices, and pastimes. One great source of enjoyment in which decent working men and young mechanics indulge is the Amateur Concert Room. We have already noticed in the Free Concert Room how amateurs are encouraged by the professionals, and permitted by the proprietor, to sing or dance as they have talent or inclination. We have seen, too, in the "Sparring Saloon" how amateurs are encouraged, and what is the result; and we purpose now to describe a Saturday evening spent at an amateur singing saloon, or, to speak more correctly and technically, "a great harmonic gathering."

The harmonic meeting which we visited is held in one of a class of houses which has sprung into existence during the last few years. It combines the degradation, depravity, filth, squalor, and misery of the gin palace, with what is very inappropriately called the jollity, sociality, conviviality, and harmonious merriment of the "free and easy." To show how noted it has become, we heard it named in a "canine tavern," in a "free concert room," and a young man who entered the "milling crib" stated he had come from ——'s, and had "blown off his steam." Old-fashioned public-houses, quiet, cosy taverns were some years ago the rule—gorgeously and gaudily decorated ginshops the exception. "The coaches," on their way

out of town, not unfrequently stopped at this tavern, and the coachman very generally tossed off a draught of sparkling ale, for which the house was famous. In later years the house assumed a political character. Old-fashioned Tories, with jolly faces, drab gaiters, little to do and less to think of, turned in to while away an hour or two in abusing the Radicals, smoking long pipes, and sipping the "ten-penny" from the "tallboy." Lean and hungry-looking Reformers came here to meet the Tories, and if they did not smoke or drink as much, they talked a great deal more. They were lean and poor enough to be cynical; an increase of this world's goods has rendered many of them more conservative. They did then use the "kitchen" at the "tavern;" hair-cushioned seats at "wholesale establishments" are now more in accordance with their views of reform and their notions of social enjoyment.

More recently the house has undergone a complete change, the front part has been rebuilt, and it is a gin palace. The kitchen, although not rebuilt, is remodelled, and it is a *singing saloon for amateurs*. The change of character which the house has thus undergone is not more remarkable than the change which has taken place in the views of the worthy proprietor. Not many years ago he was found in the ranks, and fought under the banners, of "total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors." With great energy of character, and a vivid recollection of his own importance continually before his eyes—with a tolerable education, and a cultivated taste for music—he made himself known and popular amongst the water drinkers, and held offices of trust in some of their societies. With that humility for which earnest men are frequently distinguished, he thought his own way as good as any other man's, and a good deal better. He wanted to lead—he would not follow—could not get all he wanted—converted his temperance coffeeshop into a beerhouse—found it more profitable, and followed it up. He is now the proprietor of a notorious singing saloon, presides at the piano, and conducts the harmonious entertainments of his visitors. He is a rosy-faced, bustling sort of man. His change of views as regards intoxicating drinks does not appear to have improved his deportment. He seems, from what we saw and heard, to consider that he is conferring a favour on society at large by devoting himself so energetically as he does to provide for the amusement of the people on Saturday evening. Standing behind the counter wiping the perspiration from his brow—having just escaped from the crowded kitchen with an order for "four glasses of whisky, two glasses of rum, hot, seven ales, and four ginger beers,"—he says to some well-dressed silly fellows, who are at the counter waiting for admission to the kitchen, "It's no use you trying

to get in, the place is full to suffocation—I'm almost stifled ;" and then, addressing the barmaid—" Mary, don't you let any more in until we get some of these fellows out ; they fill up the place and *drink nothing*." We were amongst this silly set, and having to wait, in accordance with the landlord's respectful command, "until some of the fellows were got out," we spent the time in observing what and who surrounded us.

The vaults are very lofty, and divided into compartments in the most modern style. The crushing and crowding in and out of this place, the money that changed hands, and the large quantity of liquor of all sorts consumed here in twenty minutes, were perfectly astounding. Men dirty, unshaved, drunk, blasphemous. Women half-naked, ragged, riotous, and obscene. Children trying to sell matches, or pick a pocket, under the pretence of selling pencils or cleaning shoes. Mothers with infants at their breasts, and market-baskets at their feet, sitting on the form half drunk and wholly asleep, waiting for their husbands, who are taking a parting glass at the counter. The jabbering of the crowds in every compartment, the cries of children, the calls for drink, the denunciations at "John" for not being smart, the threats at "Mary" for her "imperence," the heat of the place, the sickening smell arising from the motley and filthy groups, the singing of some drunken butchers at the counter, the sounds of a popular song from the kitchen, accompanied by the tones of the piano—all these we had to endure whilst waiting for an entrance to the Amateur Singing Saloon. To remain a short time in this place, you might suppose either that the drink was being supplied gratuitously, or that there was no other ginshop within a mile—so great is the crush, so brisk is the traffic. We were led to inquire if this was an unusual scene, and were informed it was not. From half-past four o'clock in the morning, Sundays excepted, until twelve o'clock every night, the place is never empty. The business fluctuates, but Saturday, *Sunday*, and Monday are the busiest days. During these days the vaults in all parts are as full as we now see, and the scenes of wretchedness, degradation, and debauchery even more appalling than what we describe. Three men sleeping on the form were pointed out to us. These creatures might be said to live in this place. True, they were turned out to prowl on the streets when the place closed at twelve o'clock ; but they were some of the earliest customers in the morning ; and here they remained, alternately eating, drinking, smoking, or sleeping, "living on their luck," it was said, or on the good nature of visitors. A stout, drunken carter, with two dissolute women in company, crushed by us to obtain "trotters"

—cooked sheep's feet, which commanded a ready sale at twopence each. Turn which way we would, filth, misery, and moral impurity assailed us. Nothing more deplorable can be imagined than the phase of Liverpool life here witnessed. This house, the scene of so much depravity, belongs, or did belong, to a member of the town council. What may we expect if our rulers are so unscrupulous in the adoption of means for the accumulation of wealth?

A song being concluded in the kitchen, several young men left, and, with half a dozen others who had been waiting, we obtained admission. The room was about ten yards long and three yards wide; the ceiling was very low, and, with the tobacco smoke and the number of persons present, the atmosphere was oppressive. The place was crammed with decently dressed men. After standing a few moments the landlord asked us to step forward, and we obtained a seat at the upper portion of the room, near the piano. The glasses having been replenished, the gentleman who had last sung "made good his call," at the request of several friends around him. He was a sallow-looking young man, in the Saturday evening dress of an engineer—clean washed moleskin vest and trousers and blue cloth jacket. Standing up, and in a tremulous voice, he said, "Mr. Chairman, I call upon that there gentleman (pointing to a stout fellow who had just come in). I have not the pleasure of knowing his name, but he has a singing face, and I hope he'll favour us." This "singing face" was surrounded by dark whiskers, was adorned by a pug nose, and was round in form and dark in colour. The gentleman's name being announced, he, after the manner of amateurs, began to croak and cough, expressing his astonishment that the company should select him; felt sure that it would be a failure; that there would be "a hole in the ballad;" that when they heard him sing one verse it would prevent them asking him again, and much of the same kind, which the fellow evidently did not think himself, for he caused it to be announced to the pianist what he intended to sing, and that gentleman, with an air of consequence, erected his head and rolled off the tune, as if to tell the company "it requires a person of my abilities to do that." Turning round to the amateur, he said, "You'll find that about it, sir;" then he pulled up his shirt collar and touched up his hair, looking, as he says he is, "the model landlord."

The man with the "singing face" had not a good voice. It was a husky baritone; his manners were free, and he threw a good deal of spirit into an Irish song, with a chorus, in which the company joined, and with which they seemed much pleased, for the applause at the conclusion was loud and general. Some person then gave a

toast—"Luck in a bag; shake it out when you want it." This was considered good and funny. A young man close by us, who had brought a younger companion with him to initiate him into the mysteries of this species of enjoyment, said, "That there little cove—as gave that here toast is the rummest little fellow alive. You should hear him imitate a jackass or a grinding stone!" We had thought it would require little preparation on his part to imitate the donkey, and heartily wished to see how he represented the grindstone. Our cogitations were interrupted by the announcement of another song. The last singer was comparatively a stranger, it appeared, and therefore "left his call in the hands of the chairman," who smiled at the confidence reposed in him, and said, "You have acted wisely, sir; you shall now hear a song, and no mistake. Mr.—, please to favour us."

Mr. — was an old-fashioned, slovenly, cadaverous-looking man, a member of the gentle craft, who worshipped St. Crispin at the shrine of Bacchus. He was a great favourite with the landlord, could sing a Jacobite song in capital style, and had attracted many visitors to the kitchen. He is a very regular attender, devoting his mornings to the bar, his evenings to the kitchen. He can tell a humorous story, whilst tossing off his "quart or two" of porter, to the great delight of the crowd of beggars and thieves who are smoking, laughing, swearing, or grinning around him. He says the landlord "is not stingy, and is never within a go or two when I am hard-up." The announcement of his name created quite a commotion; the tables were knocked, the glasses rattled, hands and feet were industriously at work to welcome the man, who was said to be "a drunken snob, but a tip-top singer." He sang "Row, row, my bonny wee wherry," with good taste and much feeling. The opinion formed of his singing by some men near us was thus expressed—"There's no flies about it." As soon as the song was finished and the applause had subsided, the company raised their glasses to their lips and said, "Your health and song, Mr. —." In true dramatic style the "snob" acknowledged the compliment by graciously bowing his head to the company. There was now a pause. There must be many pauses during the evening in order that drink may be brought in, and there being between seventy and eighty persons present the demands made required the utmost efforts of several waiters to supply them. Those who had "been drinking ale all night" would "take something short," therefore ordered glasses of rum, or whisky. We had now time to observe more particularly the characters around. They were evidently all hard-working men, but many of them hard

drinkers also ; several young men cleaned up, others unwashed, as if just left work. One or two foppishly-dressed young fellows, proud of their persons, and anxious to display the rings on their fingers, attracted our particular attention ; they bore a striking resemblance to the characters you will meet with at the stage entrance to a theatre about the time of rehearsal. They did not conduct themselves at all like ordinary visitors ; they touched each other's glasses, and pledged each other in melo-dramatic style. They manifested a desire to become acquainted with the last singer, and we thought would like to be called on. One of them "stood a tot," as he called it, for the vocal son of St. Crispin, and, as we expected, was rewarded for this by being asked "to favour the company." Of course he was surprised ; he coughed, he laboured under severe indisposition. His companions coaxed him, and he coaxed himself, and nerved himself for the task by sipping hot whisky. After these usual amateur preliminaries had been gone through, he proceeded in a "thin reedy voice" to tell the company that "I have wandered in dreams." We believed him, and felt sorry for his position. We took him to be a dramatic amateur, and promised to "meet him again on the Rialto."

The young fop's wanderings in dreams was followed by a toast ; then another song, "Britannia the Pride of the Ocean," sung by a working man in a dirty fustian jacket. There was little time for social chat, for what with the cries of "Order, for a song," or the cries of orders for ale, rum, whisky, two two's of gin, "a glass of rum and a little black beer, and don't drown the rum with the darkey ;" "five glasses of porter, and bring a lot of pop with you ;" "a paper of tobacco, &c., you could with difficulty join in any conversation. We noticed several men come in by a door close to the piano, and found this was the back entrance ; so that there was no necessity to go through the dram-shop, or be sickened with the spectacle there to be witnessed. Every seat was now filled, and several men were standing up about the fire-place and near the door, getting their drink as they best could, and putting up with all sorts of annoyances, from the crushing of waiters and the abuse of visitors whose persons were incommoded by the crowd. The fascination of this sort of entertainment appeared to be great, and has been got up entirely "through the enterprise and sagacity of Mr.—," who, we were told, "had long wished for an opportunity to show to the world what he could do for the working classes." Men differ very widely in their notions of philanthropy. This is another proof.

After such manner is the Saturday evening spent by hundreds of working men at this gin palace and singing saloon. The time and

money consumed here totally prevents the Sunday being rationally enjoyed—places their progress, socially or morally, out of the question. Some of these men will call in here for a pot of porter as they leave work—at the solicitation of their friend they will have another—they will then hear the singing in the kitchen—will go to hear just one song before they go home with their wages and here they are, it is eleven o'clock—their families are at home perhaps without food or fire; their wives will be driven to desperation—to drink—wide-spread misery and social degradation and depravity are the result. With another class it is different. They have vanity enough to think they can sing, and ought to exercise their talents publicly, and here is a room solely set apart for such efforts. Young men dress themselves in their best, turn in here early in the evening, drink glass after glass before they are called upon; in some cases have the mortification to go away after spending several shillings in liquor, and yet have not been asked to sing. If they are fortunate enough to be snubbed, and treated with contempt, and leave the place in disgust, they ought to be very thankful. The greatest misfortune that can befall a young man is to be a successful amateur. It ends in ruin of health, loss of character and position. The miserable creatures we now find at “free concert rooms” are the produce of such places as we have attempted to describe. No man who entertains a proper respect for his character, or is desirous to attain success in life, will ever frequent such assemblies. Their very existence reflects upon the working men who are their chief supporters. It is true the landlord is a nice-looking fellow, and he knows it. He is very anxious to make his visitors comfortable. He likes to see working men jolly with their glass and pipe. This may be quite true; but bear in mind what he says—“Stop till we get some of these fellows out; they fill up the place and drink nothing.” It would thus appear that selfishness is the foundation of his friendship. Such is the deduction that we draw from what we witnessed at one of the Amateur Singing Saloons.

CHAPTER XIV.

AMATEUR actors and amateur would-be actors are a much more numerous body than people generally suppose. They are sometimes found in groups by the shore, Demosthenes like, reciting to the winds and surging waves; sometimes they are stragglers in lonely walks, startling loving couples from delightful reveries, by wildly calling on the earth to gape and bury them in oblivion, to the prompt

answering of which call loving couples would in no wise object. Sometimes they are occupants of the middle story of a jerry-built house, and the delicate lady of the establishment is thrown into hysterics by their energetic summoning of the powers of darkness, or their offer of a kingdom for a horse. In cozy snugs they may sometimes be found, descanting on the merits of great actors, offering grave objections to their readings and conceptions of dramatic authors, relating what they themselves have done for the advancement of the drama, and for the public charities of the town to which they have the honour to belong, or whispering in the ears of friends what thrilling effects they anticipate producing by a series of original shuffles, moves, and renderings of the part they play in the next performance; the whole of which shuffles, moves, and renderings they are carefully concealing in the course of rehearsal. Arduously engaged, the amateur may be found canvassing his brother amateurs for the high honour of playing the fool, or bargaining with the manager of a minor theatre for the privilege of playing a robber, lover, prince, or king. The life of an amateur actor, in short, is a fitful, dreamy, unreal, and bombastic life. It has its serious, its comic, its serio-comic phases; and fortunate is the youth through whom this life-stream flows, if it leave him only labelled "supremely ludicrous."

The stage generally is the first love of boys of an imaginative temperament. As soon as Young Norval's spirit-stirring aspirations can be spoken with anything like dramatic intonation, the faith in having had a dramatic call becomes deeply rooted in the mind of the youthful aspirant, and in season or out of season he will favour you with specimens of power, intensity, rage, or pathos. The approving smiles of fond parents or indulgent friends being won, forthwith he joins an amateur dramatic society, treads heavily the boards, laden with the conviction that genius has claimed him as her own. If the love of poetic truth or harmony be the basis of a passion for theatricals, the desire for stage-strutting will subside on the awakening of the intellect in conjunction with the imagination, and the dramatic art may be cultivated with the enthusiasm of genius. Unfortunately, few men of genius rise out of the class who devote their energies to the pursuits of the amateur acting club; but many a youth, who might have been following an useful, an honourable, and a respectable occupation, is now vagabondising about the country, or dragging out a miserable existence on the boards of a minor theatre, through the tastes he imbibed or the associations he formed at such clubs; for—conceal it, young amateurs, as you will—theatrical associations are far from tending towards the formation of business

habits, or leading you into a system of healthy moral or intellectual training. Distinguished gentlemen patrons, and the *élite* of female society, encourage the young ambition of stage-struck heroes by your presence and your smiles; but bear these few facts in mind—that the preparations for performances for the public charities and the gratification of silly vanities have been the means of introducing the majority of these young men to the bar, the snug, or the pot-house, where gentlemen of the profession resort to take their gentle restoratives—that by professional actors the inmost souls of these nurslings are fed, and stage traditions, stage sentiments, and green-room jokes are the only solids the great body of them can digest. Bear in mind that many of them have wives, and that the performance you may now be witnessing has cost those wives midnight watchings and bitter tears—that many of these tinselled heroes are fathers, whose means in life are very limited, and that the few shillings which would have bought Lizzy a frock, or the pair of shoes she so much needed, have been laid out for the purchase of a ticket for the grand supper at the winding up of the performance, the entertainment of a great actor, or in the refreshments required after the dry rehearsals—that many of the striplings, who walk the stage so lightly, have parents, “broken-hearted parents,” whose anxieties were first awakened by their sons joining the amateur actors, and whose habits are not as regular as they were—that the majority have employers who expect a fair day’s work for a fair day’s wage, but who are not very likely to get it from young men engaged in rehearsals for private and public performances, and stimulated at night with the cup which rarely fails to produce morning headaches, and that the unfitness for regular duties induced by amateuring and morbid love of praise, which “enfeebles all internal strength of thought,” have led members of such societies as you may now be patronising to adopt acting as a profession. “Well,” some will say, “what of that?” Ay, what of it? Were your parents who prided yourselves in having gained a livelihood by industrious labour in an useful and honourable calling, and were your hopes of domestic happiness centred on an only son, and he should take to a profession which had become thoroughly degrading and degraded, because of its general direction to pander to the worst passions of men, and by reason of the precincts of its operations being shamelessly converted into pandemoniums, where women are offered up for the vilest purposes—where youth is ensnared and corrupted, and where the leer of the aged libertine first blasts the young victims of the bloated beldames who there have special privileges for trading on woman’s ruin—would it not prove a sad calamity to you? Philanthropists

and clergymen, who avail yourselves of the services of talented young Thespians in aid of the funds of the institutions over which you preside, to the above add burning ambitions, petty jealousies, cunning intrigues, serious quarrels, comical settling of differences connected with amateuring for the public good, and the small item of £70 or £80 as the actual cost of such displays of egregious vanity—then ask, whether the good bears any proportion to the evil?

But is not the study of the drama of a highly intellectual character? In the abstract, as the metaphysicians say, it may be; but in the course of our experience we have met with very few amateurs who were capable of settling down five minutes at a time to study anything. Look at yon group clustered round the theatre door—their seedy gentility, shorn whiskers, Pisa-set hats, and dirty stage copies of the evening's play in hand, mark them as gentlemen of the profession. They are at their studies, and the meanest of them will act his part with better taste, with more judgment, and in purer English than the brightest luminaries among the general run of amateurs. The drama will long have to remain low, if its elevation be dependent on the amateurs whose path we have so often crossed. Amateur dramatic societies will never raise either the intellectual or moral character of our young men. They will, as they have hitherto done, supply our respectable stages with enthusiastic supernumeraries and third-rate actors; our perambulating theatres with their tinselled heroes; our quack medicines with their most celebrated vendors; and our public-houses with their amiable, and talented, and rotund landlords.

Liverpool has long been pestered and taxed with its stage-stricken heroes—ay, and its heroines too. But a short time ago, lady amateurs were actively engaged much to the neglect of their household duties, in the study of their parts for the society's charitable performances. It has, however, now become indecorous for them to strut their hour upon the stage; and we hope that, as intelligence advances and opportunities open up to young men for thorough intellectual culture, the tinsel-loving spirit that has rendered worse than ridiculous many youthful Thespians of our good old town may, in the elegant phraseology of an amateur friend of ours, "take its flight to realms unknown—to regions unexplored." Not always could amateurs hold their heads above water as they have done of late. In days gone by they were put to their shifts to pay the necessary expenses incurred by donning the buskin and the sock, for they were simple-minded in those days, and thought not nor pretended to think of aught "save glory's field," as our amateur friend would say. They met—or, according to the record contained in the amateurs' manuscript magazine

of that time, which contains some beautiful specimens of caligraphic art, and would afford the curious in such matters ample illustrations of obsolete spelling, "they assembled in the garret of a dilapidated and untenanted house?—no—in the upper story of a ruined building deserted by man"—In the evening?—no—"when the sun's broad disk had just dipped beneath the western horizon"—To rehearse the parts they had committed to memory during the day?—no—"to escape from the dull monotony of the world, and breathe the air made pregnant with immortal genius." They occasionally give public performances?—no; "they went forth a band of brothers to cull sweet flowers in Thespian fields." And to clear the expenses they charged a small sum for admission?—no—"to meet the demands of certain catiffs they had to wring from the hard hands of peasants their vile dross." Their last public performance was interrupted by the police, who, under the vagrant act, took nearly the whole company to bridewell, where they were detained until the following morning, when they were reprimanded by the magistrates and dismissed, the parents of these stage-struck heroes having given a guarantee that they would not allow them to commit again the like folly. These facts are, however, thus narrated in the manuscript magazine:—"The hopes, the aspirations, the last combined efforts of these sons of Thespis to raise the drama to the highest pinnacle of national grandeur, were on a sudden dissipated—all nipped i' th' bud by the liveried myrmidons of a tyrannic law, who seized with ruthless hands the sacred person of the anointed monarch of this band of heroes, and with Goth-like irreverence and Vandalic barbarism, dragged him, his crown, his truncheon, and his spangled doublet, together with his queen and peers, with brows all garlanded and in court attire, through the public highways, leading to the gloomy dungeons set apart for miscreants and felons. There, in those dark abodes, were they immured during the long and dreary night; and when the morn, 'the whistling morn,' with breath of incense and with cheek of bloom, peered through the grated chinks which barréd" [Here follows a note, evidently intended for the printer, to the effect that if he omit placing the accent over the "e" in the word barréd, the whole of the copies will be thrown upon his hands. The record then proceeds] "from the outer world the Thespian band, the colour from their cheeks had fled; the spirit of their monarch for a moment drooped, and that tongue of his that bade the Romans mark him, and write his speeches in their books—Alas, it cried, 'What—will—my—mother—do?' Time wore on apace. The heavy doors of their dismal cells did creak, and forth were they led into the open courts of public justice. With tragic strides and

brows serene, approached they the magisterial presence. The crown and truncheon were in the hands of the unfeeling myrmidons, who, with mock intent, did place the kingly symbol on the dome of thought, the palace of the soul, of that Thespian king, whose eyes in so fine a frenzy rolled as to strike with awe the dispensers of the law, who, being touched by the sparks emitted from all the crystal orbs of that dramatic corps, they them restored to the hearths and homes of their fathers. And," continues the enthusiastic narrator, "from those hearths and homes shall other homes and hearths arise, from whence shall spring a morally gigantic race of stagy heroes who shall"—[Here there is a flaw in the manuscript, but we think the sentence runs thus—] "who shall wring the neck of the tyrannic law which curbs the steed that genius rides, as Hercules of old did strangle the Nemæan lion. Those who sit in high places shall bend at their bidding, and be proud to have their names associated with the intended journeyings of the corps along the tangled paths leading to the Thespian fields. Though the demands of those sordid spirits who trade in tinsel and in rouge shall be a thousandfold more exorbitant than were those their fathers had to meet, they will be able, by help of a certain potent spirit, that bears the mark of 'H' upon his forehead, and 'g' upon his heel, to ride triumphantly their hobby steed. They shall be distinguished for their skilful playing upon a trumpet, which no man can possibly doubt to be their own. Differing from the common herd of men in gait, expression, and in turn of thought, they will stand out in bold relief from the class who are known in society as men of practical wisdom and good sense. They will instinctively measure into feet the honeyed accents falling from their lips—even those accents addressed to their familiar attendants, who shall be in waiting to bring, according to command, the rosy wine or whisky-punch in crystal goblets. Plain English shall seldom trip upon their tongues; theirs shall be the language of the spheres, and folk shall wonder what its all about. But, alas, their onward way shall not be altogether smooth—thorns will here and there obtrude, tearing their togas and rendering wigs a bore. A snake will cross their path, and strike with his envenomed sting the body corporate; but comfort, consolation, ultimate satisfaction and serenity of mind will be obtained through the medium of a poetic prologue, that shall convey to them the important news, that a snake did also once appear in Paradise. The unbounded generosity of the brightest star in that galaxy of dramatic genius will be manifested in a manner unprecedented amongst poets—the members shall be announced as the authors of the original poetical effusions that shall give grace

to one of their mightiest efforts to reach the 'high-top-gallant of their joy,' and this generous-minded Thespian and favourite of the muse, whose sole authorship none shall doubt, will refrain from putting them to open shame. Internal broils shall cause the body great dismay: one who will be regarded as peevish snarling, and too clever by half, shall be black-balled for reasons that shall best be known unto the general council; but their leading star declining to play the fool, and their failing to get a country comedian to supply his place, a deputation from council shall wait upon the youth whose willingness to stab men i' th' dark shall have been apparent from a train of amateur reasoning, which deputation shall not be sent back with a flea in its ear, but with an assurance that he will do anything or play anything if they will insert a paragraph in a newspaper. A paragraph not meaning anything, nor intending to mean anything, shall forthwith appear, and Richard will be himself again. Many brethren of the amateur corps will choose to go their way alone to win the bubble reputation on the boards; but they will find that disappointment is the lot of genius. They will have to stand against the withering laughter of an unimagined and an unappreciating world, that will deem their efforts for the revival of the drama the extreme of folly, the offspring of a vanity most deplorable. They shall, however, see themselves alluded to in large characters as 'distinguished,' 'celebrated,' 'popular,' and 'talented gentlemen amateurs,' which shall puff them out to the proportions of the regulars, whose garments they shall don. But in union only there is strength, and in the bonds of brotherhood will the aspirations of their young ambitions be fully realised. The council assemblies, unlike the assemblies of their fathers, shall be held near unto the shrine of Bacchus; many shall become priests thereof, and turn from Thalia's art to ministering spirits. Sundry 'politic reasons,' however, will induce the body corporate to take itself into a chamber devoted to pursuits of a purely mundane character. Here the spirit that hitherto shall have animated the amateur dramatic corps will languish, for the atmosphere of such regions has been and ever will be uncongenial to stage-struck heroism. But, oh, the eyes of my prophetic soul grow dim. No! I again behold that band of Thespian brothers. What! to be dispersed, and seem as bubbles inflated with the concentrated essences of vanity and conceit! Why do you show me this? I'll look no more."—Thus abruptly closes the last manuscript magazine of the amateurs of the past: the above extract has been transcribed from the only remaining copy, with the view of affording the gifted in prophetic interpretation another proof that in the present day remarkable prophecies have their fulfilment.

CHAPTER XV.

THE revelations of Liverpool Life which we are now about to lay before the public demand—what from all upright, honest men we feel sure they will obtain—the most careful and earnest attention. Whether we look at the nature of the practices, the character of the persons who indulge in them, or the evils inflicted thereby on all classes of the community, in any one or all of these lights, “**BETTING HOUSES**” must be looked on as public pests, which a wise Legislature would at once get rid of, and “**betting men**,” as a class, dangerous and despicable members of society. This is strong language, but *we have the facts* which will enable us to prove our position. Some years ago, betting had assumed such an alarming character that the strong arm of the law was uplifted against it. The blow given at that time did not destroy the evil, but only altered its character. To keep a “**betting bank**” was illegal, to suspend a “**betting list**” in the house was equally so; heavy penalties were fixed in each case. But the evil exists still, under another name—exists, too, in this town, to an extent difficult to imagine, and, socially or morally considered fearful to contemplate. The Act for the Suppression of Betting Houses, 16 and 17 Vic., cap. 119, passed 20th August, 1853, gives full and sufficient powers to magistrates to deal with and put an end to such places, and fixes a heavy penalty on the proprietor, and also on all persons who can be proved to frequent such houses for the purpose of betting; and the second clause of the act states that “**Every house, room, office, or place opened, kept, or used for the purposes aforesaid (that is, betting on horses, &c.), or any of them, shall be taken and deemed to be a common gaming house within the meaning of the act 8 and 9 Vic., cap. 109.**” We do not presume to show the magistrates their duty, but we think the public have a right to know that the magistrates have the power to abate, if not abolish, this growing and dreadful nuisance. We are prepared to admit that if the act were carried out strictly to the letter it might be found to infringe on the liberty of the subject. This no true Englishman will permit; but looking at the spirit of the act, and bearing in mind the terrible crimes suggested and committed to a great extent through the existence of betting houses, we assert that magistrates ought to exercise a discretionary power in the granting of licenses to houses where they must know betting is regularly practised, and in several instances where these practices and their attendant vices form the best support of the establishments.

Public attention has recently been aroused to the career of the

betting man by the miserable life, horrible crimes, and ignominious death of William Palmer. "A wretched, undone, cleaned-out betting man, who suspended himself on a tree near the Wrexham-road, immediately after Chester races," did not excite much attention; but the legal suspension of Palmer before the gaol at Stafford brought out the whole feeling of the country. What William Palmer was while in the employ of Messrs. Evans and Son, in this town, many young fellows *are* whom we have noticed in their peculiar haunts during the last few months. *His* wretched end *may* be theirs. If the excitement of a gambling life—the inordinate desire to be "a great bookmaker," to become rich, "to drive good cattle,"—have got hold of them, they will not hesitate to lead a life of *tricky* expedients, of miserable makeshifts, of never-ending alarm; and rather than be defeated in their object they will, like him, go to any length or depth of criminality, and thus, as their phrase is, "make an impression on the turf." But it will be said few go this length; there are hundreds of betting men respectable fellows, who "do the legitimate." We regret very much that the members of this fraternity are so numerous, and question the respectability or legitimacy of any of their proceedings. Indeed, it is the number and variety of classes mixed up in turf practices that excite our fears. Those practices are not confined to the shopboy or youth, whose paltry peculations, made for "investments" or "sweeps" are in most cases soon discovered; or to the greater adept, who refines the mode of embezzling his master's property; or to the more "respectable man," who involves himself, then swindles his creditors; but the ramifications of this pernicious vice are so extensive that we see it in operation daily—in the haughty aristocrat who "levants," as well as in the stable boy or "chicken-butcher," who "can't show."

Let this suffice for generalities. Now we go to particular facts, as our manner is. We intend to show the betting houses of Liverpool, what they are, and the persons who frequent them. In doing this we are compelled to make some preliminary statements, which may be said to comprise a glossary of terms used by betting men; otherwise, in giving a life-like description, we could not be understood except by the initiated. The term that we hear most frequently is "bookmaker," or "round better." This is a person who lays the market odds against each horse as it comes into the betting circle. For instance, Bob is making a £50 book for the Cesarewitch Stakes. He commences immediately after "the entries are out," by offering £50 to half-a-sovereign against anything. One hundred and thirty horses are entered. If he have luck, he may lay against fifty or sixty before the acceptances are declared, when many that he has laid

against may "peg out," a term used for paying forfeit. After this time the odds decrease, and favourites come into the market. Having laid, say against fifty horses, Bob has £25 in his book to meet £50 in case any horse he has laid against should win. But he has still eighty horses to lay against, and in all probability will lay against every horse in the race, with few exceptions. He *must then win*. And if it so happen that a horse wins that he has not laid against, it is called "*skinning the lamb*." Not having entered the winner's name in his book, he wins all the bets he has made. In large and even small races there are horses entered for the purpose of making money, without any pretension to a chance of winning. These are called "dead 'uns." Others are brought into prominent favour by leading men for the same purpose. These are called "money horses;" and when a horse has been in favour up to short odds, and then recedes, it is termed "fishy." A horse that gallops low, and head down, is called a "daisy cutter." An animal with slight racing qualities is called a "leather flapper," or "plater." "Welcher" is a term used to denote a person who may be met with on every racecourse. His object is to lay good odds, and by such inducement secure many customers. He receives the cash when the bet is made, and should the "event come off crabs," he makes his escape with the money. If caught, the favourite punishment is ducking him in a horsepond, or pumping on him. "Crabs" is a term used when everything turns out contrary to expectation. "Levant" is to migrate, or "hook it." "Going for the gloves" is betting to a greater amount than it is possible for the better to pay. "Put your shirt on" is expressive of great confidence in backing a horse, and literally means to stake all you have even to your shirt on the result. "Laid up," or "gone out shaky," is when a man is unable to meet his creditors. "Doing the legitimate" is confining yourself to legitimate book-keeping, never overlaying against any particular horse. "A monkey" is £500; "a pony" £25; "a quid," or "shiner," a sovereign. Such is the phraseology of the turf, but the list of terms might be considerably extended. Sufficient is given for our purpose. We can now see the men as they are, and hear them speak in the tongues which their own habits and practices have rendered familiar.

Betting houses are more numerous in Liverpool than is generally supposed, and less respectable than the proprietors would wish the public to believe. Some of them are in very public situations, and the keepers take no inconsiderable pains, spare no expense, in giving them such names or decorations as will convince the most unsuspecting of their object and tendency. Thus far no secrecy is attempted to be practised. The house may be known as a quiet comfortable hotel,

but "rather a late house," or as a Turf Tavern, celebrated for the excellent play at billiards which may be seen in the back, or the character of the cattle that are exhibited below. It may be only a jerry shop, in a quiet street, where working men assemble in the snug to take a glass of ale, and are eventually led to be betting men; or it may be a tap or snug near a large drapery establishment; but whatever be the designation or locality of the house, no effort is made to conceal the practices indulged in thereat. Some of the betting houses are remarkably convenient. A draper's assistant can, whilst getting his "gill of bitter and a crust" in the forenoon, back the Brother to Grey Tommy for a "fiver;" not that he has the money to spare, but he may get it before the settling day. The betting house which stands most prominent in Liverpool, and is spoken of as "a good house," is in a spacious thoroughfare. Any hour of the day or evening may be seen the crowd of scamps, "welchers," "duffers," incipient and leviathian bookmakers, which surrounds the door and chokes the entrance, and which has rendered it notorious. If you press your way through the dirty group you will pass barmen, publicans, stylish stable boys, and young gentlemen dressed to imitate grooms. You will be eyed suspiciously, for all these fellows are on the look-out for a victim. But press on: take no notice—"do the dummy," as we were advised to do whenever we went to a strange place—and you will presently find yourself at the bar. There you will find a young lady dressed in silk, her hair neatly arranged, her smile pleasing, her manners dignified, yet free. There you will see slovenly young men slouching, some sucking the end of their cane, others sipping beer or cracking nuts. Just now all the "turfites" eat large quantities of filberts. We'll know the reason of this before we have done with them.

Opposite the bar are two small tables: at these you will see dirty old men with gill cups before them, and from time to time they whisper a good deal with each other. But pass on: go through the glass door, and you will find yourself in the betting room. It is about ten yards long by eight yards wide: during the day it is lighted from a skylight near one end of the room, at night by glass globes pendent from the ceiling. There is in one corner a bookcase, or shelf. This contains one hundred volumes of the "Turf Register," and nothing else. There ought to be a "Turf Dictionary," that, we are told, is being "compiled by a crack." The room is decorated with portraits of racehorses and celebrated jockeys. As one of the frequenters of this room said, "We wonder how any one can take a pleasure in looking at such ugly mugs." Over the fireplace is suspended a board, covered with green baize. On this

are pinned the latest telegraphic despatches, and sometimes the latest "state of the odds." Lying about the tables we see the sporting papers; and, as the stuffed hair seats are inviting, we will sit down. We notice, first, that the persons here belong to every class in life, but they all appear to know and understand each other. They do not talk much, and few of them drink. We are speaking now of day practices; the evening "is a horse of another colour." Their talk is all done in whispers, and not many of them sit down: they stand in little groups. These groups undergo in a few minutes great changes. The entrance of some bookmaker attracts a crowd round him, and these remain buzzing and speaking in each other's ear until attracted by a *novice*, or an important announcement. You will see young men step smartly in, just look at the board, as a merchant would do in the Exchange room, and retire, sometimes rubbing their hands with delight in anticipation of the "shiners," or looking as mournfully about as a "welcher" about to be trounced in a trough. The variety of characters to be met with here in an hour presents a melancholy phase of Liverpool life.

This house has four entrances: there is the door through which we have passed, then a door at the side, which looks like an office entrance, but is in reality the entrance to the billiard room; there is an entrance from an entry round the corner, in another street; and, lastly, the tap or cellar entrance. Thus all classes of customers can be accommodated. The tap is a hell-hole. Here, on almost any afternoon or evening, may be seen groups of women of the worst character, dressed out profusely in silks and satins, their heads decorated with feathers, their cheeks daubed with paint. They giggle and pass vulgar jokes amongst themselves whilst waiting for the gentlemen, who are now in the betting room, and who have promised to meet them here. It is no unusual thing to see a stylish young fellow, a clerk who has obtained a day's holiday or is "off on sick leave," when he has dropped in for a good thing," take one of these "passion flowers" to his arms, carry her to "a Hansom" which is waiting at the door, and tell the driver, in answer to his inquiry, to "drive to — if he likes." There may be, though the graceless wretch little heeds it, a terrible reality in his words. Laughing at this scene, at the door, you are sure to see "Noisy Bob," "The Chicken," "The Doctor," the stylish publican's son, who was a merchant's clerk, but is now a bookmaker, "the ruddy-faced tout," "the bludgeon man, who is a duffer," and a host of other "celebrities," who have all "stood" for their portraits, and which will speedily be presented to the public; but, as we are sitting down, let us see who are about us,

Look at those three men at the table. Two of them have just come in : the other was waiting about anxiously looking for some one until he appeared ; now he seems comfortable. The light-complexioned young man, who wears his hat very low behind, has many rings on his finger, and in all seasons of the year wears an overcoat, is the son of an attorney. His father, who has been dead many years, amassed a good deal of money, and left all his children very handsomely provided for. This son whom we now look on took to the turf some years ago. He "drove tandem and lived loud," but for months past he has been going down. The races or betting houses during the day—the theatre, the dancing saloon, or disreputable house in the evening—have blanched his cheek : there is not the same buoyancy in his step—it has no elasticity ; his eye has lost its fire, and his voice its force ; he speaks low, and in a drawling way says he does not know "whether a sherry will suit his book." That tall, brawny fellow, who is pressing the young man to "have a cut in," is now a bookmaker. But a few years since this man used to carry out the spirits from his master's store to the publicans—his master's customers. He had two large copper cans slung across his shoulder, and was not remarkable for anything so much as his ignorance of good manners and his knowledge of tobacco. But he married a landlady ; he became acquainted with "Ruff's Guide to the Turf ;" he invested "*a tenner*" now and then, was successful, gained confidence, and found that he could, without inconvenience, be unscrupulous enough to succeed even if he went further. He went further. He is now looked up to ; and here is a young man, of superior education and attainments, in conversation, deep and earnest, with this vulgar fellow. To hear him talk of "an oss," and look at the manner in which he handles his book, are things not to be forgotten. He drives a trap now—indeed, often drives to the betting house in it, getting some of the "outsiders" to stand by "whilst he gets a little on inside." The third man in the group is a dark, thin-faced man, of middle age. He is not seen so often here. He likes other houses better than this, and prefers the Manchester betting 'change in Liverpool ; considers the Liverpool men "a rotten lot," and speaks of them as "fishy." He is cool, calculating, cautious, penurious in his habits, smokes frequently, but seldom drinks—when he does, it is *gin* ! He is frequently engaged reading the "tips" in *Bell's Life*, and often speaks of having "got a good thing on" at Manchester. He is a seatholder in one of our evangelical churches, and has the privilege of carrying round the box when there is a collection. He has had the advantage of a pious father, and has listened to a funeral sermon in which the

merits of the patent were held up as an example to the children. How he makes his attendance here square with his profession elsewhere, we are not prepared to say, for we never heard him speak on the point. We shall be meeting with him again, no doubt, and he will then inform us. Such are this trio: they are types of classes.

Round the room is every variety of character, but publicans this day preponderate. They are as a class largely interested in the turf, and many of them bet a good deal, but *never do it at their own houses*, and thus evade the act which bears particularly on this point. There is one man whose influence has acted most perniciously on licensed victuallers, but the sketch of him is not yet completed. Here are now around us broken-down merchants, clerks, foundrymen, one convicted dog-stealer, a "gent" said to be "worth a plum" in the shape of £20,000, cardrivers, cartowners, brewers and their draymen, counter-skippers, billiard players, the fellow who "does the music on his cheeks" for coppers in the low houses about the docks—all looking suspiciously at each other, whispering, winking, moving stealthily about, and passing from their lips a cant phrase, or speaking in professional language. They have no confidence in each other, every man believing his fellow to be the same as he is himself, but a good deal worse; and thus they pass the time in the betting house, trying to deceive or defraud each other. To call this a truly English pastime is a prostitution of language.

In our rambles amongst the betting houses we met an aged man with a scabby face. Part of his nose was eaten off, and the portion that remained he managed to fill with snuff. He wore spectacles, drank whisky punch, and *pretended* that he was connected with the daily press. He was loquacious, and informed the company that he had been asked to do a series of articles on betting houses for the "Sketches of Liverpool Life," but, from a "*sense of honour*," he had declined. His "*sense of honour*" did not prevent him from stating what was false.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE consternation and excitement created in certain quarters by the exposure of Betting Houses and betting men show that there is yet hope for some of these deluded creatures, for they were not ashamed to confess the truth and justice of all advanced, and acknowledged the faithfulness of the portraits. The tall fellow with a squeaking voice, who knows what *whisky* is, and *how to sell it*, would persist in saying that "somebody had been *piping*." He could not do any

business on Monday, neither could any one else. He lost what little temper he has in consequence, and is bent on "doubling up," or "potting," or "scratching," "the dirty scoundrel who piped on his pals." We *know* that, whoever "*pipéd*," he danced with vexation, and had many betting men to join him. Our well-intentioned friend, who suggests that the "nasty cur," whom he has "spotted," should be well "doused with flour," would do well to reflect seriously on the truth spoken; and if just now, as he says, "all is turning out crabs," let him be thankful—it will be a good opportunity for him and others to extricate themselves from such a terribly vicious course of life, and will prove a great blessing to themselves and others who look up to them, to find that they may yet prove decent, respectable, and respected members of society.

We stated in the last chapter that a law was passed for the abolition of betting houses and the suppression of betting lists in any house, but that the evil still existed under another form, thus rendering the provisions of the act nugatory. We have been favoured with a copy of "The London Betting Price Current," printed and published by "a betting commission agent," to which we find attached a notice requesting that "it may not be posted up for publicity." It is a four paged circular, on foolscap paper, and in this we find the prices stated at which business may be done on the various races throughout the country, the latest betting at the West End and in the city, the weights at which the horses are handicapped, and the acceptances declared. An extract from this trade circular will shew the public the legitimate style in which gambling business is now being conducted, and the columns of any of the so-called sporting papers will show this still further:—"—suggests that when commissions are forwarded to him it would be advisable, and more particularly within a few days prior to the race, to instruct him to get on at the best price obtainable, instead of confining him to any fixed price, as so many and sudden fluctuations take place, that the delay occasioned by the necessary correspondence is frequently attended with serious loss to the party wishing to invest." There is no difficulty in meeting with these lists—for there are houses known as "list shops;" and what is this but setting the law at defiance? Indeed, the boast of betting men is that the law cannot touch them. "Laws were only made for slaves"—*they* are free-born Englishmen; and "all business now-a-days resolves itself, in the long run, into a 'game of speculation.'" Such was the language in which a great Liverpool bookmaker defended his profession and practice. Then, as to "sweeps," there are large bills displayed in the windows of several houses in this town calling public attention to the advan-

tages which may be secured by the investment of a small sum. And is it not a well authenticated fact that hundreds of youths are daily being led astray by the disreputable practices, a knowledge of which they first obtained by their visit to a house where a great "sweep" was drawn? The police courts, the statistics of crime, and the plundered shopkeeper or merchant, can furnish a reply.

We will now return to the betting house, where we left the worthy trio sitting at the table, settling their differences and adjusting their books over a "glass of sherry, a cigar, and a half of brandy." We noticed from time to time shabbily dressed men, with an air of faded gentility about them, walk through the room, looking stealthily about them, open a folding door, and enter the room at the back. A telegraphic despatch comes in. It is received by a stout, well-made, bullet-headed, whiskerless man, dressed in a Belcher bottle-green coat with brass buttons, on which is a representation of a greyhound's head, the "benevolence" expressed in which contrasts forcibly with the "combativeness" and "destructiveness" which distinguish the wearer of the garment. This gentleman's trousers are drab, made to fit very tight, and display legs more remarkable for strength than straightness. He reads aloud the important announcement contained in the despatch just received, and walks forward to pin it on the board, followed by a group of loungers and hangers-on from the front of the house, who have been up to this time gazing about them at anything or anybody, or, as a turfite would express it, they have been "gathering gape seed." Most of the men in the room gather round the board, and then retire to a little distance to whisper and plot against each other. The report that a despatch had arrived now reaches the back room, and there is a rush of dirty fellows from thence; one carries "the cue" in his hand, and we then discover where the billiard room is situated. Those blear-eyed, haggard-looking men, which we had noticed passing to and fro, are billiard players. They have not at this time been playing for any stakes, but just keeping their hand in, so that they may be "fit as a fiddle" when they obtain the chance of "plucking a pigeon." They do a little in betting when the opportunity offers, and look sufficiently unscrupulous to turn their hand to anything but honest employment. As one of these fellows said in our hearing, but not in this house, "Work and I have fallen out many years ago. I have been in prison, but I would not work; I have been put on the treadmill, but I would not work; I was kept without meat for several days, but I would not work; and the man who would offer me any sort of work would offer me the greatest insult." A person present asked how he managed to live. He drew a bludgeon from under his coat, twirled

it rapidly and dexterously on the top of his fingers, and replied, "This is what I get my living by, and I am not particular how I use it; but I am an Irish comic singer, and I can play on the Jews' harp, that's all!" What says our worthy member of the Evangelical Church to this specimen of the frequenters of betting houses? Truly, to use his own words, "they are a rotten lot."

There is one man who, by his influence and example, has been the means of alluring many decent, active licensed victuallers to become betting men. Here he comes. There is rarely a day passes that he may not be seen here. He is a stout, middle-aged man, with a round, smooth face, without any prominent lines—no mountains, no hills: it is a plain, never-varying surface. He never talks much; when he does, it is about "the odds." He is an excellent arithmetician, and delights in the practice of mental calculations—will tell you in a very short time how many gills of fourpenny are in a given number of barrels, &c. It is stated that in 1847 this man cleared £10,000 by legitimate commerce; yet notwithstanding this he needs must go on the turf. He has, during the last year particularly, met with many reverses, and is said to be just now "out of luck," and lacking "feather." The manner in which we hear him now spoken of by the fraternity is a convincing proof of the heartlessness, the selfishness, the abominable vindictiveness which betting practices excite, promote, and confirm. The man of whom we now speak has been "a leviathan." He was at one time considered with regard to Liverpool what Davis is to the turf at large; but he got on to "a wrong line"—he was "shunted" from time to time. The delay interfered seriously with the rapidity of the journey he intended to make. The "stations" at which he had to stay were not those at which business could be done; and wherever he might have been journeying to at one time, it is clear to the most casual observer now what will be his terminus. He has three golden rules which he thinks betting men ought to bear in mind if they wish to become successful: no doubt he has drawn up these rules from experience. He says—"The betting man should have no business, no family, no money."

Like many other great stars, this man has satellites. Some of these are continually revolving round him in eccentric motions, the power of attraction not being so great at certain periods, when the "metal is almost melted." Others shine occasionally by their own light; when that is "extinguished" they are seen in close proximity to his. One of these satellites is quite a character. He is a great talker, can quote Shakspeare, and excites earnest and noisy discussion on the various readings given to certain passages. For instance, "Hang out your banners on the outward walls," &c. He displays

great learning on this, and much antiquarian research. He has a very peculiar way of smacking his lips, and frequently *talks* of a mutton chop, and how he likes it cooked. He does not look as if he often partook of the dainty on which he descants so ably. He sees it "in his mind's eye," and that has to satisfy him. He was well-to-do at one time, is related to an old and celebrated Liverpool family, and has spent a fortune in such manner as to procure him no return but shattered health and disgraceful companionships. Yet he keeps up a wonderful flow of spirits, and tries to forget the depth of his degradation by continually discoursing on the mode of life amongst the upper classes. We much regretted to find a man of his mental capacity and liberal education so irrecoverably given up to the scenes and associations of the betting house. Yet with this "*frightful example*" before them, how many young men are entering upon a similar career!

There are several "duffers," "dodgers," and "touts," who follow in the wake of the smooth-faced "late leviathan." Some of these fellows will go about offering extraordinary odds, in order to draw on and capture the unwary, which they not unfrequently succeed in doing. That neatly-dressed fellow, with a white hat thrown a little to one side, his cravat neatly tied, his hair redolent of bears' grease, and who frequently amuses himself by cleaning his nails—he is "the doctor." He has received a good education—has had, he says, "a scamper through the hospitals," but would rather "get anything on" "than take pins or wings off." He is loquacious, is not much of a better, but can play at billiards, and "go in for anything." He can and does make himself useful to many persons in a variety of ways, and his voice is frequently heard when there is a discussion respecting "the anatomy of the horse." He understands very well what it is to be shaky in more senses than one, and is a good type of his class. But here comes the Beau Brummel of Liverpool bookmakers. He is a dapper, dressy little man, dresses more than once every day, but delights to "do the heavy thing" after dinner. He has on now a tweed suit, the coat rounded off well at the skirts, and buttoned tight across the chest, a cloth cap rakishly adjusted on his head, and his hands pressed into his side pockets. He kept a betting house, or bank, and when the act closed his bank he "did the welcher trick," and invested the capital which he held in a spirit vaults. There were loud complaints that he did not "do the legitimate," and for a time he was "scratched." Whether he made restitution or not we cannot say, but he appears on good terms with all the leading men now, and is said to have "turned up trumps" more than once during the last few months. He is an importation from London

or Manchester—each place seems to have a *particular claim* upon him, which at times makes matters very hot. He is *au fait* at gambling of all sorts, is partial to a quiet game at vingt-un, but his principal forte is roulette and billiards. *He is a list keeper*, and lays the odds at his own house. From his card, which he kindly hands about, we find that he calls himself “a commission agent.” He keeps a trap, and drives a very fast-trotting pony. He has not yet mounted a “tiger,” but only has a rug on which are tiger heads: he wraps this round the knees of himself and his wife when they take the afternoon run. Merchants, tradesmen, and what are generally looked upon as respectable men, keep, and in some instances *court*, his society. Not that they like him—very few do this—but sometimes he gets “early lists” or good tips; and such is the want of moral courage which betting men exhibit, that even when a man is disposed to do, and really does, “the legitimate,” he will still refrain from publicly denouncing a fellow whom he knows to be a fictitious bookmaker, lest it should endanger some scrap of early information on which his stake is suspended.

The house we have been describing is not always filled with quiet people. Sometimes, towards evening, the Babel of tongues in the betting room would stupify any but those accustomed to it. “I’ll lay against Warlock,” “I’ll lay against Ellington,” “I’ll lay against Artillery,” “I’ll take odds,” &c.: you will hear these and such other phrases bawled out over and over again by all classes of betters. Merchants’ clerks, shopkeepers’ assistants, and well-dressed young mechanics now turn in. Some have been here frequently—are old hands; others just come for once, “to see how things are done.” They are probably induced before they depart, under the influence of the excitement and drink, to invest half-a-crown in a sweep, or try their luck on “the great Ellington Pot.” Having made an investment, however small, by way of commencement, they must go again to look after it, and are thus led on and ruined. They read the sporting papers, and soon become accustomed to terms which to the novice sound well, from what he conceives to be their originality. The straightforward, plain-spoken character of the Englishman is totally ignored by turfites; and the honesty of horse-racing may be gathered from an extract, where the writer, speaking of a match between two horses which is to come off at Newmarket, says—“It ought to be won by the former, but if the spirited owner of the latter should return from Moscow in time to ‘assist’ at its decision, and both horses come well to the post, a ‘sporting’ race may be expected.” Is not that significant? Truly, as our evangelical friend says, “Betting men, as a class, are a rotten lot.”

There is, in addition to other enormities which exist at some betting houses, a prolific source of juvenile depravity, by the employment of boys, some of them of tender years, in the billiard room. Sharp-spoken, intelligent little fellows are here, sometimes engaged as markers, or in various other ways which the wants and wishes of the gamblers suggest or demand. They have no regular employment; have, like the rest, to "live on their wits" or the casual coppers extracted from the "pigeons" before they are completely plucked. They hear the schemes planned for plundering; they see the so-called success which in the onset often marks the villain's career. They, for want of employment in the billiard room, go into the betting room, where they are further initiated and instructed in vice. What may be expected from boys whose occupations and companionships are what we now point out? We speak of juvenile reformatories; why do we not try to dry up, or otherwise abolish, such sources of crime?

But look: here comes a regular frequenter of the house. He is about thirty years of age, ruddy complexion, but looks now a little pale; has his whiskers closely shaved, after the manner of men of "stable mind;" has a slight halt in his gait, and walks sideways, or, as his friends say, "is crab-like in his locomotive powers." He has on a waistcoat with sleeves, over which he wears a blue apron with a bib. He carries both his hands in this bib, and by such means his "book" is pressed very closely to his heart, for he always carries his book in a pocket *inside* the breast of his vest. From his apron string dangles "a steel," emblematic, we suppose, of his profession. He is familiarly hailed by the men around; and when he looks at the board he withdraws his hands from his bib, rubs them rapidly together, and slaps a fellow near him on the back, saying he has won £20. He then sits down, talks quietly to "a duffer," draws out his book, and his face assumes a more serious aspect. This, we are told, is a very decent fellow, who has seen many ups and downs in his betting experience, which is of some magnitude. He is not a showy man, but a safe one. He has a good knowledge of pedigrees, and, on the whole, is looked on as a successful better. He commenced his professional career as a backer, cultivated a connection, and is now ready to give the market odds from two shillings and sixpence to a "quid." He is remarkably impulsive, and the most casual observers can discover whether he has "skinned the lamb" or "come off crabs," if they notice how he pursues his proper calling after a good race. If the former, he has a kind word for any one, and plucks the fowls as if he loved them; but woe betide any of the feathered tribe on which he is called to operate after he

is "crabbed"—he pulls them almost limb from limb. Whatever success may have attended his operations it has made no difference in his appearance, for as you now see him he has been for years. He complains very bitterly of many practices now in operation, and thinks "betting is not any better than it should be." You will frequently see some of the most stylish men of the room talking to him; and the attention paid to his remarks, which are generally made in a very low tone, would warrant any one in saying he "knows a thing or two," and "did not cut his eye teeth yesterday." We met him one day walking arm-in-arm with a man who drives a noble lord. This well dressed driver had just left his master attending to his duties in a court of justice, and had "just dropped down" in the meantime to hear "how the odds stood with regard to our crack Fizzy for the Sellengar." Here was the groom "ready to lay a crown to anything" against some horse which his friend believed "would be heard of." He has many illustrious examples, whom no doubt he looks to and strives to imitate; for peers as well as peasants find employment for their time and money in the unhealthy excitement and vicious practices engendered and enjoyed at the betting house. Nay, are not statesmen found who declaim eloquently against the admission of Jews into Parliament, and stigmatise the attempt as an endeavour to unchristianise the Legislature of the country, yet by word and deed will encourage by their presence, and support by their power and purse, a system of gambling which is fraught with the greatest evils to society at large—a system which has ruined thousands morally, socially, and physically—a system that has in it not one redeeming feature—a system which destroys soul and body—a system as much opposed to the spirit of Christianity as vice is to virtue? Truly may we say, in the language of the evangelical sportsman, Betting men, as a class, "are a rotten lot."

CHAPTER XVII.

IN the *Manchester Guardian* of Saturday last there appears the following statement from its London correspondent:—"I am sorry to have to report another addition to the not inconsiderable number of gentlemen whom turf and other speculations have compelled to fly to the continent within the last year or two. In the present instance, the victim of this infatuation is a noble viscount, well known in sporting circles, not unknown in politics as a writer of verses something like the Ernest Jones class as regards style, but very much the opposite as regards purpose. I may as well tell his name, for a few hours will of course make the fact no secret. It is Lord Maidstone. Within the last few hours he has been obliged to succumb to the long-pending pressure of liabilities utterly beyond his power to grapple with, and has quitted England. Lord Maidstone

had no ordinary amount of abilities, notwithstanding 'The Deluge' absurdity which he spoke and wrote at the time of the general election of 1852 ; his capacity for rapid calculation was extraordinary, and if among his fellows any difficulty arose about complication of odds, involving elaborate algebraic workings, &c., 'Maidstone' would settle it at once without a pencil. His flight, coming so soon after that of Mr. Lawley and Mr. John Stanley, is likely to cause further depression in turf circles. Indeed, the whole aspect of the turf this year has been of a gloomy character. Reaction has set in after the wild spirit of speculation which reigned up to 1854 so universally. Lord Eglinton, Lord Exeter, and other 'magnates' have retired, the horses are to a great extent in the hands of the professionals, and the apathy existing every where in London, save 'Tatt's,' the Turf Club, and certain suspicious-looking places in the vicinity of the Hay-market, contrasts strangely with the excitement which used to prevail some three or four years ago, when the great races of the year were about being decided. Now, the Derby alone has any exhilarating effect upon 'the public' here."

THERE is an old English proverb—" 'Tis wit to pick a lock and steal a horse ; but 'tis wisdom to let it alone." Those who argue in defence of betting practices should ponder on the truth contained therein. That it requires ability and sagacity of no mean order to succeed on the turf is not denied ; but it is denied that the exercise of superior ability in vicious practices and pursuits renders the vice less vicious, or the pursuits more pleasurable. Your great rogues are invariably clever fellows ; their ability ensures success. Their expertness and ingenuity excite the envy and admiration of viciously-disposed men. The many, in striving to imitate the success of the few, fail because they lack the power. They may all have the will, but have not the wit. They may perhaps pick the lock, or get into the stable by some means, but they do not succeed in stealing the horse. How much better for themselves and society were they to leave it alone. If a few men, by prostituting undoubted talent and practising wonderful sagacity, do succeed on the turf, what proportion do these bear to the thousands that are ruined by the vice ? and it should be borne in mind that the success of the few depends upon the ruin of thousands. As "he who once hits would be always shooting," so the youth who wins a sixpence in a "shop sweep," or a half-crown on a horse race, would be always winning. He likes the excitement—he loves it—and it becomes with him "a moral drunkenness, that is worse than the physical." He goes on ; he cannot resist the temptation, nor is he humbled by the debasement. He gets into the stable, is detected, fails to secure the horse, and becomes ever afterwards an object of distrust and suspicion.

We will now transfer the attention of our readers to another betting house. The exterior is old-fashioned, clean-looking, and respectable. There are generally a few showily-dressed young men at the door, and occasionally, when the races are on, we notice tall, hirsute aristocratic men, decorated with jewellery, who amuse themselves by

pulling up their shirt collars, pulling down their wristbands, cutting their finger nails, adjusting their massive breastpins, playing with their Albert chains, or smoking cigars. These are betting men looking out for business. They are very courteous in their manners, will fall back very gracefully to allow you to enter the house, and are not particular in making observations on your personal appearance when they think you are out of hearing. If it be during the morning, from ten to one o'clock, you will find bread and cheese placed here for the accommodation of visitors—a good kind custom, which is most shamefully abused here as well as elsewhere, for there are traditions in existence which go to show how some men obtain their food—positively all their food—"on the cheap," with the exception of breakfast, by going from house to house. At one house, as here, they will get bread and cheese; at another a nip of ham (very salt though); at another a fried or potted herring; at another a roasted potato and pickled cabbage, or a piece of sausage; at another a cold joint to cut at. The tradition goes on to show that by paying for three or four glasses of drink, many men have obtained abundance of meat.

We will suppose that you take a crust of bread and cheese and pass into the parlour. Here you will find many persons engaged whispering to each other whilst enjoying the good ale for which the house is famous. There is not much business done here in the forenoon. The men you see now are in the main young men engaged in mercantile pursuits, and have come here for a small lunch. Whilst they are obtaining this they learn the state of the markets, and can prepare for "business" in the evening. The barmaid used to be possessed of wonderful powers of memory; she could tell the pedigree of any particular horse, and was not unfrequently called on to decide important wagers. She was a cheerful, smart, active young woman, who took a delight in "chaffing" the "gents" who considered themselves "smart, rather." But if you turn in here in the evening you will meet with a wonderful variety of characters, and on the eve of a great race the place is filled—indeed, additional accommodation has recently been provided. The "heavy brigade" may be seen here very frequently, and many members of the corps prefer this house for "doing the legitimate in a quiet, gentlemanly, respectable way." There is a young man of clerical appearance, who is just now devoting himself energetically to turf practices, and may frequently be met with at the betting house. He wears a long coat, straight collar, very small neck-tie, broad-brimmed hat, and displays on his fingers jewellery of questionable character, but of unquestionable size. He is very thin, very pale, very fond of punch, very talkative, and very

clever (he thinks) at what he calls "gammoning the greens." He appeared to be indulging in this pastime when we saw him on a recent occasion. He spoke of his visit to "the other crib," and of the number of low fellows who were about; said that he did not wonder at people noticing them; indeed if the papers took it up it would not excite his surprise. He had heard that the turfites were to receive a visit, and their practices to be spoken of, but he should like to see the fellow who could do it. No one could do it and live. The presence of respectable men, such as are found at that house, would petrify such a creature. He could not breathe so pure an atmosphere—and much more to the same effect. The young man spoke also of "a monkey." There were many people present who thought of one.

It is now nearly eleven o'clock at night: the theatres are "over," and many of the frequenters will no doubt turn into the betting houses. It is a good time for getting something on. Men will be excited, not so much with what they have seen on the stage as with what they have partaken of in a sly corner between the acts. We will sit down here and introduce our readers to a few members of the "heavy brigade." Before doing so we shall have, in order to make ourselves intelligible, to give a further explanation of terms. The betting men are in this town divided into classes, and are spoken of as the "heavy" and "light brigade." The heavy brigade consists of the bookmakers and round-betters. The light brigade consists of the backers of horses: few of them make books. The "heavies" are men fully devoted to their profession—they are betting men, and nothing else, and are with few exceptions "plucky," which is a term used on the turf to express a man that cannot easily be shaken off. They not unfrequently, as we will show, keep betting houses, or, as they are termed, "shops;" in every case they are "list men"—that is, they expose lists at their shops, in direct defiance of the law. We speak of things which *may be seen*, so that the authorities, or those who have the administration of the law, are without excuse. The "light brigade" are the most numerous, and not least dangerous, class. This brigade, as we have before said, consists of the backers of horses; and in this class are to be found clerks, shopkeepers' assistants, and persons who have a legitimate business to which they ought to devote themselves, but who, through a variety of causes, are led to "do a little to help their salary." Our evangelical friend is in this brigade. As a backer of horses he has been very fortunate. Two years ago the tide ran strongly in his favour, when "Trout," "Bourton," "Alonzo," and others "kept the pot boiling" for him. He does not snub the Liverpool men so much of late, and if report speaks correctly, will have to "alter his whistle, and sing

small." He is fond of "putting the pot on" any good thing he may get from head quarters. "Putting the pot on" signifies that a deal of money is staked on the chance of the horse winning; but should the event come off "crabs," the pot is then said to "boil over." "Duffers" are a class of backers whose money is not to be depended on should the event come off "crabs." These at the race-course not unfrequently become "welchers." They make a practice to talk very largely and loudly about what horses they have backed, and thus induce others to follow suit. They have generally some "information from the stable which may be *depended* upon;" and through such dodges many a fellow has "gone for the gloves," or gone out shaky. "Loafers," or "sponges," are a class of men who can be seen any day, between the hours of ten and three, in the neighbourhood of "the shops." Their object is to whisper "soft somethings," or more frequently "unmeaning nothings," into the ear of the betting man. They not unfrequently succeed in persuading the "fresh man" to put a little on for them. They have always "*a secret* from the stable," which they keep with wonderful fidelity, by telling it to everybody. Amongst this class are to be found discharged stable boys, warned-off touts, cleaned-out speculators, and scamps of all sorts. These are the characters that now to such an alarming extent infest many of our public thoroughfares.

The most active and influential member of the "heavy brigade" has a well-merited cognomen. He looks like an overgrown boy, talks very loud sometimes, and generally with a very dictatorial air. He frequently wears a cap, and his dress is very slovenly when he is "knocking about the crib," which he now makes his head quarters. When he is out on business he sometimes wears a long coat, and sports his hat as a lady does a fashionable bonnet, at the back of the "brain pan." He is considered "the leviathan," or largest book-maker in Liverpool. At one time he used to talk of "monkeys" very glibly, but now finds it to suit his book if he does in "ponies," nor will he turn up his nose at "a fiver." He is said to be anything but pleasant in his mode of conducting business, and his professional brethren speak of him as disagreeable. He gives no quarter, and is terribly vindictive: woe betide the needy wretch who cannot "stump up" on the "settling day," for he is sure to expose him on all sides, and is not at all chaste in his choice of terms. He endeavours to make himself very familiar with his cotemporaries, but is injudicious, and oversteps all bounds. He has done more than any other man of "his school" to show what it is possible for a youth to become who devotes his whole time and attention to the arduous duties and professional practices of the thorough "turfite." He does the heavy

thing sometimes, and it would form an additional sketch of life and character were John Leech to see him, whip in hand, driving a celebrated fast trotter. When business is brisk at "the crib," his voice is sure to be heard above all criers—as one of his friends says, "It is too bad that this trap is not closed, for the good of the house." He has been heard to say that but a few years ago he was so "green and flummuxed" that he could not muster courage to go into a house to ask what horse had won, but had to secure the kind offices of a friend to set his anxiety at rest; yet now we see him enter a house which is stated to be his own—but, as that friend says, "It was a good job for him that he had a father."

Another member of the heavy brigade was formerly an assistant in a large "grocery," and always manifested an attachment to his present calling. He says—"I have cut the counter, and make a good deal more 'sugar' by betting than ever I did by serving it out." He is now a "bookmaker" and "list man," stands well in the profession, and is a "rising star." He is about five feet six inches high, compactly built, and dresses with very good taste. He has a slight lisp, and is remarkably fond, when all about is "safe," of hearing his own unmusical voice. He is shrewd, has a good flow of animal spirits, and is a very agreeable fellow. He can calculate the odds to a "point," and reckons himself an authority on gambling matters. He does not confine himself to the turf, but, with a true spirit of business, is ever open to a match at "pitching, turning, and catching a fifty-six pound weight." At billiards he is great, and seldom or never gets "bested" in a match of his own making. Should he not be engaged in play, but "taking stock" of a game, he can readily "spot" the man that is "going for the money;" and he never allows any opportunity of "turning over an honest quid" to escape him, but generally succeeds in getting something on. Occasions may arise when he does not get the "right office," and is "put in the hole." With wonderful sagacity he soon discovers "how the cat jumps," and he "tumbles" accordingly. "Tumbling" is a term used for changing your position in consequence of some underhand practices which you have discovered. Our hero is solely devoted to betting. Like hundreds of young, active men who lounge about this place, he has no other means of obtaining a livelihood. They sometimes have the chance of meeting and mixing with a few men of substance and character (after a sort) which leads them to fancy they are respectable fellows. They are generally too idle to work at any industrial occupation; and, unfortunately, the usages of society hold out inducements such as we have shown to lazy and evil-disposed minds.

But look, who comes here? No other than a Shakspearean character. He is a young man of genteel appearance, but of slender abilities, natural or acquired. He is lamentably and unpardonably ignorant, and the passage, "Train up a child in the way he should go," &c., in his case meets with a remarkable fulfilment. He is the son of a publican, and served his time to a mercantile pursuit. During his apprenticeship, after the hours generally devoted to legitimate commerce, he might be seen nightly in the back parlour of his father's house, amongst a group of gents, "sniffing snobs," "touts," gamblers, and wastrels of all sorts that there abounded. Card sharpeners turned in frequently, and the young man became attached to cards and frequently had a "cut in." Those were the glorious days for sporting men: betting banks were doing a large business; betting shops were driving a roaring trade, and "monster sweeps" and those of juvenile proportions swept off the investments of hundreds of industrious but deluded artisans. Under the paternal roof of our friend "sweeps" were a great "card," and in the distribution of tickets he gave a helping hand, and rendered the governor essential service. By such means he worked himself a connection; and having a taste for betting, and this being pretty well cultivated, he became a betting man. He can now accommodate any one with the odds, from one shilling upwards, and is supposed to be doing a good trade. He is quite a laughing-stock amongst his professional brethren by reason of his vanity of person, the air he gives himself, and the awkward blunders he commits from sheer ignorance of the commonest affairs of life. His maternal parent takes him under her care sometimes, and during the race for a celebrated cup she was on the stand with him, taking good care that he did not "go for the gloves." In our rambles we see he has opened a "shop" of his own, and, as the phrase is, he will be at home at all hours, and glad to make his friends comfortable.

Here is a dark-complexioned, slovenly-dressed man, of middle age. He has a sinister look, and smokes a long pipe. Some vile-looking and filthy-spoken fellows in the room call him by his name, and ask him "what he has on." He is far gone in drink, but replies that he expects to "skin the lamb" in a race which he names. This man's career is worthy of especial notice. He has good natural abilities, married very respectably some years ago, obtained a large sum of money through his wife, and invested it in a public-house. He was induced to go "a little on the turf," and soon began to like this better than his legitimate business. As might be expected, the latter declined. He fell into difficulties, and had to leave his house and fall back upon the charity and good nature of his wife's relatives. They again established him in business; but the associations

formed at the "sporting houses" had become riveted to the man. He could not shake off these fetters, and lower and lower was he dragged down, until morally and physically he is ruined. Some of the men who knew him in better days are about, but they have no feelings of remorse at having assisted in his ruin, or commiseration for his present position. It is characteristic of the vice of betting that it blunts—nay, destroys—the moral feelings, and, like the canker worm, eats its way silently but very certainly into the better part of the man. Thus are the words of the evangelical sportsman strictly true—Betting men as a class "are a rotten lot."

CHAPTER XVIII.

It is a matter of great surprise and deep regret to find amongst the various classes of which the betting ring is composed so many drapers' and general shopkeepers' assistants—young men respectably connected, and generally well educated, devoting themselves to the pursuits of the professional gambler and the practices of the worthless spend-thrift. There are houses in the town almost solely set apart for this class; and hearing this broadly stated at the betting houses—by men, too, who appeared, from their own admission, to be making "a good thing out of the counter jumpers"—we determined to pay a visit to (as a particular friend of theirs calls them) "the calico coves." Their favourite house is in close proximity to a large drapery establishment. Their is no loss of time, for as soon as the labours behind the counter are at an end the labourers are before the bar. As the gentleman with the large white cravat observes, "they leave the yard-stick and begin gilling it." The snug is a small place, but great numbers cram themselves into it, and here the evening is spent, in betting, card playing, drinking, and smoking. Many of the men who assemble there are not unfrequently loud in their declamations against the tyranny of their employers, and argue earnestly in behalf of "the early closing movement." They do not state that their employers, with a just and proper consideration for the moral and intellectual welfare of those in their employ, have provided within their establishments every facility for young men not viciously disposed to spend the evening in a rational and profitable manner. We heard nothing of the library, of the lectures, of the reading rooms. These things are lost sight of, set at nought; and still these assistants cry out on behalf of "the early closing movement." They should consider that the vicious and unprofitable manner in which their leisure is now

spent reflects and acts prejudicially on the great mass of their brethren, who are making efforts on behalf of this important and very desirable "movement." Thus it is that the well-disposed and virtuously-inclined have to suffer for the follies and failings of these incipient turfites. They who would spend their leisure properly and profitably cannot get it to spend by reason of such young men as we see here, who appear to have already more on their hands than they know rightly how to use.

Professional betting men turn in, and under the excitement of drink and the influence of bad example, "the calico coves" fall an easy prey to the deep-laid scheming propensities of the unscrupulous turfite and bookmaker. Our blue-aproned friend used to make this place his head-quarters at the commencement of his professional career. He called it his "snuggery;" and here nightly he might be seen conning over his "Ruff's Guide" and "Handicap Book," to both of which he devoted great time and attention, and thus laid the foundation for his future fame. He cultivated, as he says, "a nice connection" amongst drapers' assistants, and eased them of all their superfluous cash. Eventually he found the money market very tight, and removed his quarters. He now pronounces them to be a set of "duffers," and rejects their business altogether. Whatever be the ability of these young men to pay their wagers, they talk of stakes in amount far above what they are likely to receive for a year's salary. They speak of "quids," of "fivers," and "tenners," as if such trifles were not unfrequently found amongst the sweepings of their shops. They play cards for sixpence a corner, drink tenpenny ale, talk of their "trap and turn out" on Sunday, and consider this a rational and respectable mode of life. There was a good deal of chaff from one young man respecting some person whom he called "Vandyke, our governor." This illustrious individual, it appeared, "believes in tips," and whenever he has "a horse sent very strong," he is sure to turn into the betting house and "post a pony or two." He does not associate much with betting men, considers them "low persons," yet is humble enough to stoop to the men and join in their practices when he believes "a pony" can be made out of them. He will not be seen going to the betting house in daylight, but, as the young man, in describing his practices, observes, "He lets it be dark, gets some beer, douses his hat down over his eyes, slouches into the house, posts his 'pony,' and gets out again to shops that he likes better. Isn't he out of sorts if he gets crabbed? I believe you, my boy."

The most unmistakeable betting man here is a very long one. If you see him in full swing, his arms in full play, he may not be inaptly compared with the old telegraphic poles on Bidston hill. He

has passed through a severe ordeal of late, and will have to lay himself in lavender for some time to come. If he and many others whom we might describe were to pay the same amount of attention and devote their energies as fully to the prosecution of their proper professions as they do to the turf, the turf would have less to answer for, and the town would be less disgraced. One of the young men, from the manner in which he spoke, considered it something to his credit when he told of devoting his Sunday mornings to "reading 'Ruff' in bed, and smoking some excellent cavendish." We do not know what part he has taken in the public discussion of that important question, but certainly his eyes whilst he spoke exhibited evident symptoms of the "early closing movement." The young man who is tired of cards and won't toss any more is spoken of by the professional betting men as "the leviathan." "He derives his name from his very extensive transactions, for sometimes he will lay out as much as five shillings on a strong tip." He is evidently cautious, and does not want to involve himself, yet likes to do a little at the game, and, by reason of the restraint which very properly he is enabled to exercise upon himself, he merits the genuine contempt of the thorough-going turfites. We hope he may still continue to merit it. What can any man gain, be he spoken of with respect, looked up to, or revered by such characters? The envy of the betting man is more desirable than his pity or patronage; an honest man will prefer the former, and treat the latter with the contempt it deserves.

We left the "calico coves" at an hour when there is sure to be a host of celebrities in full feather at their nightly haunts, and on our way to the working men's betting house we will call in to see the bookmakers at home. Here they are; they seem to fare sumptuously every day—are now indulging in the genuine Havannahs, and speak of the rapid increase of stylish cigar shops as things to be noticed. They have wine before them, but do not drink much. Simpletons come in from time to time, and make a deposit of a quid or two; but "trade is infernally dull just now," one of the professionals observes, "and not likely to look up for some time; what with the 'Maw-worms of the press' and the slopers from the ring, the turf is going to 'Bill Hayes's.'" The men present are all representatives of classes, and hence the necessity that the public should become acquainted with them.

There is a fellow hanging about—indeed there are hundreds, but this one may be noticed more than any other; he is a pimp, a tout, a messenger—in short, anything. He was a sole mender; is a sallow-faced, cadaverous-looking fellow, as if he lived on cobbler's wax, and washed himself in the water in which soles are soaked.

The "gents"—men with little bits of coloured ribbon round their necks, straight collars, striped shirts, broad straight-brimmed hats, with high crowns, loose coats with wide sleeves, tight trousers, and "Balmoral boots,"—get this dingy man to "do errands." One day he was called by two of these young fellows whilst he was engaged in the arduous duty of smoking a long pipe. He was requested to follow them at a respectful distance, and proceeded to do so. He, in his haste to obey orders, thrust his long pipe into his coat pocket, leaving the shank sticking out, and passed through the principal street in the town at the tails of the gents, with the long pipe in this position, much to the annoyance of the two worthies when it was pointed out to them.

Amongst the great number of men who devote themselves to betting, there are several who, from their over-anxiety or timidity and fretfulness, are designated "of the knock-softly school." The best representative of this school is now before us, talking to the noisy gentleman. That is he—below the average height, his head down, and his hands pressed into his trousers pockets. He is very cautious, of a highly nervous temperament, and frequently indulges in "fancy bets." He used to have a share in a list house, but is now a book-maker. He seems to require a vast amount of sympathy to reconcile him to his fate, when Dame Fortune frowns, and when an event turns out "crabs" it is misery to be near him. He is continually grumbling, either about his losses or other people's. Supposing the business to be a fair one, he is not adapted for it, and ought for his own sake to turn his thoughts in another direction. When we notice the frequency of his visits to the betting houses, it would lead any one to suppose that his own establishment receives very little of his attention.

Here is another representative man—about twenty-five or thirty years of age, stiff set, full face, light complexion, and no whiskers; has on a brown tweed suit, and from his waistcoat dangles a massive gold Albert chain. He stands with both hands in his coat pockets, but more frequently has them in his trousers', passing what coin he has through his fingers, and jingling it, "to excite the fish to bite." He has made some good books, and won a deal of money. He is very cautious, and never wins a large stake but he is sure to have a good dinner on the strength of it. He generally takes a friend or two to dine with him, and it is a picture to see him and his "pot" companion walk from the betting house to order dinner, which he generally does about an hour and a half before he requires it. The dinners are now given at a friend's house, an hotel not far off. This hotel, as regards decorations, is not surpassed in England, so it is

said. He is a proud fellow, and likes to look at himself, and here are many mirrors around the room ; a male waiter is in attendance who can speak French, which suits "the book" of betting men, who generally do not speak English. Dinner occupies about an hour and a half, then a cigar, and claret, or sometimes whiskey punch. Then our bookmakers stroll down to the betting house again, perhaps make a few entries, crack a few nuts—they are not hearty enough to crack jokes, but they tell queer stories of "chiselling Charley out of the odds," try to laugh, and in this fail completely.

There was one man, a noted character about town and about all sporting houses. His fate ought to act as a warning, if anything will affect the gambler who has once received an impetus and is on the incline. Every one knew him. He used to boast of his connection with the press, (some say he sold newspapers,) and was well known for indulging in large potations early in the day. He was a regular duffer and loafer, and was remarkably expressive about his "tips," always advising his friends to "put their shirt on" and still confining himself to a well-known Tupgill stable. On the eve of any great event he used to indulge more freely in his favourite liquor, and the scamps who were his companions not unfrequently indulged in playing on the poor fellow some practical joke. This man manifested an overbearing partiality for a particular horse, on which he risked his all for the Doncaster St. Leger. The event came off "crabs;" he lost all he was possessed of, and so much did the "event" prey on his mind that he is now the inmate of a lunatic asylum. What is "the Great Ellington pot" to him now? What will the turf do for his very excellent and exemplary wife? Bad as are turfites, vicious as is their mode of life, we never yet heard that they were not open-handed to the call of human woe when that call proceeded from one of their own class.

If we look amongst the whole list of bookmakers, there is no man stands so high in the estimation of his associates as one well-known worthy. There he is—a thick-set, corpulent fellow, the *beau ideal* of a John Bull in appearance. He always dresses in a dark tweed suit, and is very civil and obliging. He is an importation—was head clerk at "the bank," but found the game was good, and on his employer's decline he entered the "lists" himself, and is now "doing the legitimate," during the day at one house, in the evening at another. The bookmakers have regular houses where they settle down, and may always be "found at home." The gentleman is an adept at billiards, and frequently wields the cue with another honourable member of the fraternity, sometimes for good stakes. You see him now making a few entries in his book, and he has just concluded

an appointment to meet another celebrity at the "crib" to arrange for settling day. That man talking with our John Bull friend is a quiet, inoffensive man, has a stall in the market, and is one of Fortune's favoured ones. At the commencement of this season he was in what he calls a shower of luck, and succeeded in "bringing off a few good things." He is a backer of horses, and when "the talent twig him operating" they are in every way satisfied that the animal he backs is a "hot 'un," He has a partner, an attractive and conspicuous "knight of the yard," who displays a large hirsute appendage, and is remarkably clever. This precious pair have this last week succeeded "to some tune," and brought off a good thing with a "*Vengeance*."* In their present position we recommend them to ponder well on the words of Ernest Maltravers—"I once won of a man I respected, who was poor. His agony was a dreadful lesson to me. I went home, and was terrified to think I had felt so much pleasure in the pain of another. I have never played since that night." It would be well for themselves and society were they to make a similar resolution, and *keep it*.

To see a betting house of another class—the working man's betting house—you will have to visit a very old portion of the town. Here you will find a beerhouse, the sign of which is an evident allusion to the practices to be found in operation within. A bill attracts the attention. This announces a monster sweep for the Chester cup, and bears on it the name of the proprietor of the house as the promoter of the "sweep." There are to be five hundred members at one shilling each, and we are told the list is fast filling. This is what the sporting fraternity call "old times revived;" and here are victims being sacrificed, or sacrificing themselves, for the chance of obtaining £5 for the winner, £3 for the second horse, £2 for the third, and £5 to be divided amongst the starters. Independent of the actual cash gained by the promoters of a "sweep," there is to be taken into consideration the company that is by such means attracted to the house, and consequently the money spent and drink consumed during the time the list is filling. At this house all sorts

* PALMER'S HORSE "CHICKEN."—It will be recollected that the notorious murderer William Palmer gave £5000 for a race horse called Chicken, and that on running for the Oaks and Epsom, in 1855, the animal fell and seriously injured Marlow, the jockey. The above large sum formed a portion of the proceeds received from an insurance office which the murderer became possessed of on his wife's death. The new owner of Chicken changed its name to Vengeance. A singular circumstance occurred at New Market on Tuesday, when the great Cesarewitch race was won by Vengeance, Polestar (formerly the property of the murdered J. Parsons Cook) running second. These horses are also first and second favourites for the Cambridgeshire Stakes, the principal race of the Houghton week.—*Cambridge Independent*.

of bets are offered and taken; "fancy bets" prevail, and there is no restriction placed on the amount. As a good tempered, jovial sort of fellow said to us, "Begin as low as you like; but my advice is, the lower the better." Running, jumping, dog-fighting, cards—offer bets on anything, you will find men here ready "to take you." The house is cleanly kept, and no doubt is much more comfortable than many of the places from which the sportsmen come, and where they will have to return, and call "home;" for, talk as men may about rational recreation and providing it for the people, the working man must have a *home* if he is ever to become really, truly, and socially elevated; and how much will a happy, a clean, a comfortable home tend in that direction?

To spend an hour in this house, or others like it—for we are informed there are many—taking particular notice of the age, position, and character of the frequenters, will occasion gloomy thoughts to arise as to the social habits and progress of the people. If men work hard all day, partake of very indifferent food, and have no mode of enjoying their leisure hours, nor can find other associates than what we see around, no surprise need be occasioned at the scenes of brutality and moral depravity which our police court so frequently brings to light. Such houses as these, the resort of idle and dissolute men, who prey on the young, the easily led, and it may be well disposed, for yet incipient gamblers, are but the stepping stones to other houses and other haunts of worse character still. Visit any of the courts which abound in this locality—look at the filthy houses, the haggard and ragged women, the wretched children, amusing themselves in play which induces filthy habits, unattended, uncared for. The father is "investing a tanner or two" at his house or betting shop, and why should not the wife visit hers—the gin palace? He will risk his all, "put his shirt on," or pawn his honour on the result of some event; and his wife will pawn his clothes or her own to supply the cravings of the gin fiend. Such are the haunts—such the homes—such the pleasures, practices, and pastimes of the professed gambler.

A "TIP" ON A RACE.—I never rose, like many barbers whom I have known, to be more than an amateur in the affairs of the turf; nor did I ever venture a sum worth naming, except once. On that occasion I had received a tip, or marked list, sent especially from Doncaster, which assured me that the St. Ledger of that year (1839) was all but over. The information was couched thus impressively: "*** BLOOMSBURY. *Safe.*" The tip seemed as infallible as if some Pope had blessed it, so I took £15 to £5 that Bloomsbury would defeat the field. On the evening of the race I went to the Bull's Head to hear the news. There was a vast crowd of anxious enquirers, completely blocking up the narrow street. The police were not so vigilant then as now, so we escaped molestation. No real intelligence reached us that night; nothing but rumours and vague specu-

lations. A dead heat had delayed the messenger. I went home, and to bed, but could not sleep for thoughts of Bloomsbury. About six o'clock in the morning I was disagreeably startled from my reveries by an officious friend bawling under the door, in a discordant key, Charles the Twelfth! So it was. Fourteen horses started for that prize, and my "pot," instead of coming in first, as was so confidently predicted, came in nearly last! Vates, Nimrod, and other racing authorities denounced as swindlers some persons unknown, declaring that Bloomsbury had been physicked; so had I. From that time, I have taken better care of my sovereigns than to risk them upon any such uncertainty.—*The Barber's Shop, by R. W. Procter.*

CHAPTER XIX.

IT will now be apparent to all who have followed us through our exposure of the practices of professional betting men, that, notwithstanding the enactments of the legislature, which interdicts all sorts of trading in the dangerous excitement of betting or gambling, betting houses in the strictest and widest sense of the term still exist—betting men still pursue their pernicious practices. Yet this degrading vice finds defenders in the persons of clever but short-sighted men, who think it consistent in the same breath to anathematise the Pope, glorify the Protestant version of the Bible, and practise the precepts of the Scriptures by giving "tips" on a horse race. We premised in the onset that this vice had taken a deeper hold on society, in every grade, than was generally supposed. This we have proved. The alarm has been sounded, and the advance of such a dangerous enemy to all social and moral progress has been shown. We can hardly suppose, from the nature of things, that anything that has been or may be said will have much or any effect upon the professional betting man—the man so fully devoted to what has been not unjustly called "distinguished infamy." No chastisement inflicted would be of any use to such characters. But the degrading tendency of the practice of betting, the degrading character of many who live by the practice, may, and we trust will, have a restraining influence on the conduct of others who are only just entering on this vicious course of life, and are not yet so abandoned as to be deaf to all counsel or dead to all shame. Let such pause and reflect. Are they prepared to make the sacrifices which the life of a betting man requires, demands, and invariably obtains? We will from what we have seen endeavour to show what these sacrifices are.

We have heard it laid down on what may be supposed to be good authority—that is, the speaker was an intelligent man, a shrewd observer, and spoke, no doubt, the results of his experience—that the betting man should have "*no business, no family, no money.*" Honest men engaged in lawful or honest pursuits would earnestly

desire, and do generally secure, these requisites to social, domestic, moral, and physical comforts, which the gambler ignores. But then, what does the gambler require? He must have insincerity of heart, and have the audacity and hardihood to live a lie. He must have disingenuousness of conduct, and be an adept in the practice of deceit. He must look pleased when he least feels so, and display coolness and imitate serenity when in the height of despair. If he be a man of quick and lively parts, he must devote these talents to concocting schemes of villany, or practising "dodges" to entrap his less favoured and less sagacious fellows. All love of that good and noble boast of a true-hearted Englishman, fair play, must be abandoned. Tricks and treachery must be allowed to fill the place of honour and honesty. The man who would succeed, as it is called, must do all this, yet must dread no depth of degradation, fear no villany, and whilst cultivating the esteem of his professional brethren will cherish for them a hearty contempt, knowing them to be just what he is himself. He will by such means arrive at that stage of his profession when he can, like one of the celebrities, "cast his skin" over the back of his "trap," dress in yellow trousers and high boots, be looked upon as a good bookmaker, yet be more feared than respected; but, remember, to begin he must have no business, no family, no money: his end may be easily imagined.

It has been well observed that "betting men, as a class, are made up of dupes and sharpers;" indeed, the former speedily become the latter. The men of means are dupes, "who will as easily be led by the nose as asses are." The accomplished sharper—he may be a man of wit, of an apparently open-hearted disposition, which enables him to throw the unwary off their guard—seizes on these simpletons, and, under the pretence of good old English pastimes and rural sport, allures them to indulge in turf practices, and the "pigeon" is not lost sight of or left until it is thoroughly "plucked." The man, finding himself ruined, is glad to turn in amongst the depraved, and live as he can on the spoils won or taken from other dupes. Amongst professional betting men are to be seen those who were once well-to-do, respectable and respected, but are now found living on the funds and follies of those whom they can allure into the same vicious course of life, the same degrading pastimes and soul-destroying pleasures, which have proved so fatal to themselves. Turf taverns and list shops are abundantly supplied with such characters, and the number is just now, by the "disastrous speculations and rotten state of things," being largely augmented. Men of ample fortune and great intellectual ability are not always able to withstand the allurements of the turf, or "the shots of the sharpers" by whom it is now infested. Lord

George Bentinck is stated to have lost in one year £27,000, and only the other day a noble lord, a man of subtle intellect, had to "levant," not being able to meet his engagements. If these, and others such as these, fail on the turf, and have to drag out a miserable existence in a continental town, can it be surprising that others, less gifted by fortune, less favoured by nature or education, should, by indulging in the same pursuits and pastimes, find their way to the model prison, the penal settlement, or the scaffold in front of the county gaol?

But, it is asked, What have these things to do with "Liverpool Life?" Much. By the variety of sketches given, and the scenes described, it may be seen that in Liverpool betting men abound, and, notwithstanding the sneers of the spiteful, the scoffs of the shameless, the calumnies of the callous-hearted, or the abominable threats of the viciously disposed and deeply interested, we fearlessly assert that our pictures of men and manners are *true*. The characters are shown as types of classes—not to gratify any personal feeling, but that the public may see what and who are "the dangerous classes" of society. Has it not an influence of an alarming character on the moral and social life of the town, when we find such a numerous body of men spending their days and nights in the pursuit of gain by means so abominable—nay, to go further, when we find these men and their practices defended by such specious arguments? It is the literal truth spoken from time to time, exhibiting the picture without the thick coat of varnish, that excites wrath and calls forth threats, all of which go to show more strongly than anything else that our estimation of the men and the influence of their profession upon their conduct, socially and morally, is strictly correct. The man who attends an evangelical church, and yet can so far forget the lessons to be learnt there as to devote his leisure hours to the scenes and associations of the betting house, is given, not as a single instance of inconsistency of conduct, but as a type of a class; and amongst professional betting men, so strongly are the leading characteristics of the type marked, that, in some instances, several claimants have appeared for the same portrait. Indeed, it would be less difficult to describe this class of men collectively than individually. They are trained in the same school, governed by the same rule and discipline. They cultivate the same habits and manners, adopt the same language and trickery, live amidst the same fears, suspicions, sorrows, and discontent, revel in the same riotous pleasures, profess the same love for freedom, yet drag about them the chains of the most abject slavery—the slavery of their own unbridled passions. They bear, also, such a strong resemblance to each other in their position, prospects, practices, and pastimes, that, in some

respects, one history—nay, one portrait—might serve for the whole fraternity. Our object in submitting the various sketches has not been to show individual character, but the varieties of the same type, and we feel assured that all well-meaning, right-thinking, and not vicious men look on the sketches in such light, and no other.

Examples of the baneful influence of betting practices, and the fearful moral and social evils resulting therefrom, might easily be adduced from all classes of society, for, unfortunately, the evil seed sown has yielded a most abundant crop, as we have clearly shown by the sketches of betting houses visited in this town. The shopkeeper's assistant is led to blight his prospects in life, sacrifice character, position, and self-respect, in order that he may gratify the desire which has become with him a passion, and which was first kindled in his soul by his visit with a good kind friend to a snug where a "list" was kept. The young merchant's clerk who invests in "a half-crown sweep," and is induced on his visit to a betting house to have a cut in at cards, or a game at bagatelle, or billiards, is by such steps, unconsciously for a time to himself, speedily led on to the further practice of iniquity, until we see him on the Chester race-course driving a fast-trotting horse, a trap well stocked with boiled ham, cold fowls, baskets of edibles, and hampers of champagne, in company with girls of an unfortunate and degraded class, whom he may have met at the underground nightly haunts of betting men. This "dashing turn out," this "jolly spree," is all obtained at the expense of his employer, whose confidence he has abused—at the expense of his own character, lost, irrecoverably lost, by his participation in the sports of the turf. To the truth of this, many a fine young man, now performing the monotonous round of daily drudgery inflicted upon him by the penal laws of the country, would, had he the opportunity, bear testimony. The young mechanic or working man who, as we have shown, visits the betting house specially provided for his class, in after life not unfrequently becomes the pugilist, the wife-beater, and the dog-fighter. Such are the inevitable results of the adoption of practices and pleasures which are thoroughly and solely vicious, containing in themselves not one redeeming feature.

The fraudulent practices now introduced on the turf, and adopted by the professional betting man, deserve very serious consideration. Fraud of any sort presupposes deceit, and deception will be practised only by those who have entered on the incline by tampering with truth. Not meeting with any obstacle on this line, they will rush on, breaking down bluntness and honesty, until they reach the goal—prevarication and fraud. In committing the frauds daily practised on the turf there is considerable skill required; for in most cases it

is nothing more than persuading a man to injure himself, either by holding out fictitious advantages, making false promises of great gain, or artfully concealing anything like disadvantage or evil results. Hence the successful betting man (who becomes successful, bear in mind, by the practices noticed) not unfrequently looks upon himself as a very clever fellow, and is, unfortunately, looked on by many men in his own class as possessing mental ability of a superior order. His acts may, in most cases, call forth censure, but the skill and artifice displayed in their execution are greatly admired. His conscience, if it ever trouble him, is speedily set at rest by his vanity or love of fame, and the guilt and degradation of the transaction are lost sight of in the pride of superior acuteness; and yet the very men who are adepts at every species of deception, and who are the most ready to plume and pride themselves when they succeed in their schemes to entrap their fellows, are invariably the most ready to cry out when an event comes off "crabs," and they find that their sagacity has been overcome, and they are in the position in which it is their continued practice to endeavour to place others. They like to pelt the frogs, to play the bully, but in every case are the veriest and most complete moral cowards.

But, it is contended, turf practices have altered much of late. This is true: from being bad they have become worse, and even their own peculiar organs speak of many recent transactions in terms much stronger and not less earnest than anything we have stated. Horse racing in the first instance was established as a rural sport, having as a further object the improvement of the breed of horses. It became a fashionable pastime, and the nobility and gentry lent to it their countenance and support. Gentlemen were not unfrequently inclined to stake a few pounds on the result of a race, and by such means fortified their opinions; but *bookmaking* was unknown. "The betting ring" was not formed, "tips" were unheard of, "waiting races," "drugging horses," altering pedigrees, and the jugglery of handicapping were not indulged in. These and worse practices than these are "recent improvements." Betting men and the betting ring are thus described by a professional:—

"The ring par excellence may now be said to consist of some 400 strong, of whom 200 are looked upon as emphatically 'safe men,' and nearly half of the twenty score belong to the 'Manchester Division.' The betting on the Derby is at least five times as great as that on the St. Leger; and while about eight safe men 'go' every year on the former, the two or three who have received a heavy blow on the latter frequently, by the grace of their creditors, contrive to hobble on till the Cesarewitch is past. This race, as well as the Cambridgeshire, for which men in despair seem to play double or quits, has countless victims."

The same writer states that certain sportsmen are popularly

supposed to make books at all figures from £10,000 to £50,000. This may give an idea of the sums of money involved in turf transactions. Add to this the hundreds of "duffers," "loafers," and "small backers" of horses, which abound in all our towns and at every racecourse; consider, also, the touts and schemers which turf practices call into existence; the heart-burnings, bickerings, jealousies, destruction of social confidence, the "lies spoken in hypocrisy," the villanous schemes continually being concocted, the crimes suggested and committed by men of reckless character in this wretched mode of life, and it will be seen that there is great force in the golden rule of our arithmetical friend, who says—"The betting man should have no business, no family, no money;" and further, in the language of our evangelical sporting friend, "Betting men, as a class, are a rotten lot."



[END OF THE FIRST SERIES.]

PUBLICITY THE TRUE CURE OF SOCIAL EVILS.

LIVERPOOL LIFE:

ITS

PLEASURES, PRACTICES, AND PASTIMES.

SECOND SERIES.

C 774

"'Tis strange, but true; for truth is always strange,
Stranger than fiction."



EGERTON SMITH AND CO., MERCURY OFFICE, LORD STREET.

1857. 23784

DEDICATED

TO THE

Mayor, Magistrates, Aldermen, Councillors,

CLERGY, MINISTERS, AND TEACHERS

OF THE

BOROUGH OF LIVERPOOL.

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LIVERPOOL LIFE, ETC.

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CHAPTER I.

JUVENILE crime and its suppression by means of reformatories are at present occupying a large share of the attention of the benevolent public. As, however, "prevention is better than cure," an exposure of some of the sources of youthful criminality will not be out of place amongst our Sketches of Liverpool Life. We will first show what leads to juvenile delinquency, and then the means taken to uproot the evil seed after it has yielded its early and abundant fruit.

Pictorial and theatrical representations exert a powerful influence on the minds of the young of both sexes, in all grades of life ; hence the urgent necessity there is for caution and discrimination in the selection of subjects or plays to be presented before a miscellaneous audience. Considering the social position of the humbler classes, seeing the delight they take in a certain class of amusements, observing the character of the entertainments provided, the associations and iniquities by which they are now surrounded, the conclusion must be arrived at, that the theatre, which might be the medium of sound and delightful recreation, is calculated, as it at present exists, to familiarise the mind of youth with vice, to gradually reconcile it to grossness, to harden it against the restraining principle, and to lead it to look with indifference on rectitude of conduct and propriety of manners. In order that we may see this more fully, let us visit one of the theatres on a Saturday evening.

The day had been sultry ; the theatre was crowded, the atmosphere close and oppressive. There were about 1000 persons in the gallery, 400 in the pit, and 38 in the boxes. Taking our position in the gallery, we saw that most of the audience were remarkable for their youth. There were hundreds of boys under twelve years of age ; few, if any, above twenty. The filth of their persons, the

foulness and obscenity of their language, and the indecency of their conduct, were deplorable. The noise drowned what was said by the actors, and the crushing and commotion prevented many from even seeing the stage. The "great attraction" of the evening was an exhibition of "highly-trained dogs." When upon the stage the quadrupeds secured that respect and attention which the audience denied to the bipeds. The whistling, the yelling, the catcalls, the shouting for companions, "Tom-aye," "John-aye," "Jim-aye," "Bob-aye," "Gallows," "Turpin," "Jack Sheppard," and other euphonious and equally notorious cognomens, were positively deafening. The loudly-manifested exultation of those who had secured good places, the frightful cursing and blaspheming of those who were crushing their way forward, created quite a Babel of tongues. The subdued light in the place indistinctly disclosed the blackened faces of the young imps; and as, with perspiration pouring down their cheeks, they moved to and fro, up and down, cursing and yelling, they looked like inmates of a miniature pandemonium, revelling in their infernal sports and incantations. We could not endure this more than twenty minutes, and therefore removed to the pit.

The pit was nearly filled, but we easily obtained standing room, and took a place beside a police officer who appeared to be on duty, and who occupied himself in preserving something like order. Many young boys were present—a few, but not many, girls. Where did these children get the money to pay for their admission? Many of them appeared to be frequently as destitute of nutritious food as they now were of sufficient and proper clothing; yet here appeared to be four or five of one family who had paid for admission to see a "Murder in a Plantation." To see what they never could in real life—a dog releasing a British sailor from prison by cutting or biting asunder with its teeth the ropes that bound him to the prison walls—a young woman of "excellent birth," dressed in a linsey woolsey petticoat, white bedgown, open at the breast, and hair in the greatest disorder, dragged about the stage by a nigger chief in black "skin tights," whose bride she refused to become—to see this girl taken through a trap-door into the black's cave, and whilst there to hear her, in reply to the entreaties of the black, say "Never, foul monster!"—to see her faint in the arms of the "monster," who lifted her about in a variety of ways, and then carried her off on his shoulders—to witness this, these children had no doubt denied themselves of either food or clothing.

As the plot of the piece became developed, and one exciting scene after another was depicted, the youths in the pit got into a perfect furor of excitement. The nigger chief was about to consign

the young woman to bondage for life, when he was interrupted by a "true British sailor," whose appearance on the stage was welcomed by loud huzzas. Finding good broad-swords hanging ready to their hands from the branches of the trees in the mimic wood through which they were passing, a "fierce combat" ensued. The black and the sailor fought with a sword in each hand for at least five minutes. It was a first-rate melo-dramatic onslaught. The men looked at each other fiercely for a second or two—then, keeping time with their swords to the music, slashed away in grand style. At every blow they jumped up from the stage, and dropped heavily down again, enveloping themselves in dust until nothing could be seen but a kind of haze. The clashing of the swords continued; at length the black was disarmed—the dust subsided—two dogs rushed in and seized the nigger by the neck to worry him; and, amidst the loud acclamations of the audience, the sailor displayed "The triumph of the British flag" by waving a small banner over the nigger and the dogs. The animals performed their part so well that they were called before the curtain. They were dragged on by the neck, the sailor hauling on the one, and the worried nigger chief the other. The sailor thanked the audience for their "kee-ind" reception of self and partners, the dogs and nigger, and assured them that he should ever retain a grateful recollection of their cheering welcome.

We left the theatre after the first piece, as did great numbers of the audience, and were besieged at the door by crowds of little boys who had not the means to obtain admission, and were "begging checks." We did not take the check which was offered us as we retired, and as we could not supply their wants they revenged themselves by cursing our person. Most of those who came out of the theatre went into public-houses close by; and we visited one of these, which was more than usually crowded with young men and boys. Here at a long counter stood forty or fifty youths, many smoking, all drinking, or calling for drink—"gills of fours," quarts of sixpenny, three two-penn'orths of rum, gin, whisky, &c., &c. We noticed several comfortably-dressed middle-aged men in company with the youths. They had been in the theatre with them, were pleased with the dogs, and were now talking of the combat. But a group of boys attracted our chief attention. They sat at a table on one side the vaults, had half a gallon of fourpenny ale, and one of them was appointed to serve it out, which he did in a small glass, handing it round to his companions. Nearly all these children smoked short pipes or chewed tobacco, and several of them were shoeless and deplorably ragged. Oaths of the most horrible character flowed freely from their lips, and their conversation appeared to be made up

entirely of recounting the pieces they had witnessed and the character of the performers, all of which was given with remarkable volubility. After the lapse of ten minutes there was a call, "Time's up ; pass the mug, and drink up, chaps ;" and they toss off the ale, and away they go again to the amusements prepared for them in the theatre.

We visited another of our theatres on a Saturday evening, attracted by the announcement of "Immense success of the new drama," "Crowded houses," &c., &c. The new drama professed to give a sketch of how we live in this great town. Singularly enough, it was said to be founded on Mayhew's "Great World of London." We paid three-pence, and made our way to the gallery. On reaching the entrance, we found the place crammed, chiefly with boys and young men. We could not get in, but were in a much better position than some of the boys, for by looking over the heads of those about us we did obtain a sight of the stage. Two or three little fellows had climbed up the door, and were "hanging on" in a very painful position. Yet they by this means saw the actors moving about on the stage, and were apparently satisfied. The heat from this crowded assembly was intolerable, but we had become so firmly wedged that immediate retreat was hopeless. After a while we were squeezed inside, and there found that by going a little to the side we might obtain comfortable standing room, and if we could not see all that was done on the stage, we were in a good position for viewing the audience and noticing the effects of the new drama upon those who witnessed it. There were upwards of 400 persons present ; the great majority were boys, dirty, ragged little fellows, capless and shoeless in many cases. A large bench, forming the top seat in the front of the gallery, between the doors, was wholly occupied by a party of shipwrights' apprentices. Some of them had cleaned themselves up, and appeared in their favourite, well-known costume — blue jacket, white trowsers, and orange neckerchief. They rendered themselves very conspicuous by "catcalls," filthy nicknames which they applied to each other, and throwing orange peel and other more offensive matter into the pit. There were several sottish and drunken men present, but few girls or women. The females were of a wretched class, and appeared to be at the mercy of young men, or in some cases lads, who accompanied them. The theatre was very dirty.

The entertainment provided for this assembly was an attempt to show these people how they lived — to portray their daily lives and occupations. Had this not been the declared intention on the bills, the appeals made to the audience and the by-play introduced would have proclaimed it. This new drama, that had proved so successful, pandered to the worst passions of the people — showed what adepts

in "cunning dodges" were the compilers—and held before the audience as a hero, as a true Briton worthy of admiration, a drunken, depraved man, a pugilist, and a dog-fighter. An American was introduced to see how we live in Liverpool, and for this purpose he was accompanied by an Englishman, an Irishman, and a Welshman. The first is, of course, the fighting-man; nothing can stand before him; he swears at everybody, calls the Irishman "a bark," the Welshman a "billy-goat," and gets them to do and say just as he likes. The Irishman dressed the character; but we should be grieved to say it was a representation of anything that exists in the shape of a true Milesian. His language was too gross even to be indicated, and some of his allusions were filthy in the extreme. The young fellow who played the Welshman we had noticed in other characters, and anything foolish, far-fetched, or extravagantly ridiculous seemed to become him admirably; in addition to these qualities, on this occasion, he showed an aptitude in expressing his thoughts in vicious and disgusting language, and in the "salle de danse" his conduct was destitute of decency. The three men take the Yankee, in order to see Liverpool life, into Ben Jonson-street, and if they had shown this street as it is—had the picture been correct, and the moral made clear—most certainly *we* ought not to complain. Were it possible to exhibit in all its hideousness and moral impurity this street and its inhabitants, good would surely result. Could we be shown the crimes suggested, concocted, or committed here daily, or witness the dreadful mental struggle of some poor creature who has become immured in one of the dens of depravity that here abound, but who, notwithstanding the threats, intimidation, or temptation held out, feels reluctant to enter upon a course of life the result of which she sees in the character and bearing of all around—were we shown vice in its true garb, and not exalted into heroism, or tinselled in such a manner as to render it attractive—we might have rather occasion to rejoice. But this was not done.

The stage was made to represent a large room, containing lounging chairs and sofas covered with yellow damask. This was "the thieves' boosing ken." Even the Yankee expressed himself surprised at the place. The company here sat down to a small table. Drink is procured; it is *drugged*, for the purpose of robbing—or murdering, if needs be—the Yankee, whilst in a state of stupor. He, however, is too 'cute, spills his liquor, nevertheless, feigns sleep. The lights are lowered, the villains come in. They are, of course, disappointed in their booty, and a scuffle is the result. The Irishman and Welshman are both drugged, and are lying on the floor; and now the brave and bold Briton goes to work to show the audience

"how to skin the eels." He in a very expeditious manner strips the clothes off one of the stupefied men, and the mode he adopts for getting off the coat excites the loudest plaudits of the audience. After a street row, in one of the scenes, the three worthies are lodged in bridewell. The scene in bridewell was more severely criticised by the audience than any other, as far as we could learn, from the remarks made around us—"It was n't a bit like the real thing;" and many of the lads and young men professed to know the locality and peculiar features of the place from personal experience. The Englishman is asked for his character, and replies—"Go to Mr. Mansfield; he'll give you my character." This received several rounds of applause; and many similar allusions, in which was shown a deep knowledge of vice on the part of the performers, were heartily appreciated by the audience. Anything more immoral or unpleasing, even at a minor theatre, we never saw; yet this was the source of attraction, and had procured crowded houses.

During the progress of the drama, profane swearing was very freely indulged in by the characters, particularly by the English representative man. His expressions were taken up rapidly by the boys, and we heard them repeat the phrases to themselves to impress them more completely on their memory. We noticed, also, when we reached the street, that boys and young men were again and again shouting out many of the indecent sayings they had heard used on the stage—thus emulating the example of the British hero whose audacious exploits had so far won their admiration.

We know the reply that will be given in certain quarters to our strictures on the features and character of the plays presented to these large juvenile audiences—"They are licensed by the Lord Chamberlain, and he has had the opportunity of perusing them." Plays bearing the same titles may have been submitted to him; but it is incredible to suppose that any man of common sense, with the most distant regard to the morals or manners of the people, would pass the language to which we listened. The by-play is not written. The inuendoes are in every instance the production of the dramatic luminary at the time. He it is who panders to—nay, in many instances, excites—the depraved tastes of the audience. If what he considers a witty saying fails to bring down the applause he so dearly covets, he fancies an obscene jest will, and tries it accordingly. If this fail, he resorts to grimace and action; and when he sees how well his wicked leers take, he goes to still greater lengths, and revels in the devilment his depraved and abandoned conduct creates. These we have noticed in more than one instance, and in other than minor theatres. We regret this the more because we

observe that whenever the better, the purer, the higher, the holier feelings are appealed to, even amongst what are supposed to be the most abandoned, there is a response, hearty and earnest. In no instance did we ever see it fail. Even those seemingly lost creatures who appear to have given themselves up to that course of life which reflects such scandal on our modern civilisation; or those young men "whose every breath is an oath," and whose life is a deep and deepening record of crime; or those children who never knew a father's voice or felt his love, who never experienced a mother's care or saw her eye watching over them with maternal tenderness—even these we have seen moved to tears by the tender pathos, the pure morality, and the lofty and inspiring sentiments of Jerrold's "Black-eyed Susan." The stage, in right hands, might be made as conducive to morality as it is now productive of juvenile delinquency and criminality.

On another evening we visited the place, and, finding it quite impossible to get within the gallery doors, we entered the pit. It was well filled: about 400 persons, male and female, were present. They were all well behaved, and looked decent working people: our only source of regret was, that they had not something better placed before them as an entertainment. Here was another British sailor, also a pirate—whom he fought with in the most ridiculous manner—a Cockney sailor, and trained dogs! Here we had to listen to language supremely ridiculous, disgustingly obscene, and unrivalled for profanity. The Cockney sailor did and said many things which caused a blush to rise upon the cheek of women near us who were to all appearances used to attend minor theatres; and men, hard-handed fellows, who were industriously occupied eating crabs, spoke out in our hearing that "it was too bad." What, then, must have been its effect on the crowded gallery, and the boys and girls there assembled, who were by such means being prepared for the coming Sabbath?

Young Thespians who delight in the cognomen of gentlemen amateurs are almost proverbial for having large organs of benevolence; hence their readiness to respond to the calls of charity, which not unfrequently compel them to tread the boards of our minor theatres and bear the jibes, the scoffs, and the sneers of the fastidious gods. These infantile Garricks, attracting an audience of doting mothers and poetically-gifted young ladies, are petted by the generality of theatrical managers in most large towns. Being deeply indebted to clowns and pantaloons for lessons in expression, to popular melo-dramatic actors for their graceful elocution, and to heavy comedians for the purity that is a distinguishing characteristic

of their pronunciation, the mode these youths adopt for "squaring off" is not for us to carp at. In the course of our rambles through minor theatres we have witnessed the efforts of many "celebrated gentlemen amateurs" "to develop the meaning of the author," and we have often detected ourselves cherishing the unamiable wish that the author was but at their heels. It is, however, only just to say, that gentlemen amateurs, individually and collectively, would not be ashamed to call the greatest dramatic author brother, and would generously offer to *do* his next five-act play! Our sketches would be incomplete were we to omit the phase presented in a minor theatre during an amateur's performance of a favourite character. Of course the occasion of his appearance is a benefit, the play popular, and the hero greatly admired by ladies in their teens. The amateur is a slender youth. Were we of the party of young ladies in the front box row, we might call him handsome. His voice is thin and reedy, and his intonations are strongly marked imitations of some itinerant preacher. The hero of the author poetically describes a palace by the Lake of Como. The amateur hero impresses us with the notion that he is holding out to his lady love prospects of his being appointed to a missionary station, but had she half an eye she would perceive that he is totally unqualified for the duties. When the stripling is heated with dramatic fire, the ironical applause from the gallery, which is well filled with boys and girls of the poorest classes, is deafening, and when he cools down they endeavour to arouse him by the cries, "Now, dummy," "Go on, dunce," and other less harmless epithets, that may be heard amidst laughter loud and long. Yet this audience can appreciate manly and noble sentiments, however dull the actor may be in his expression of them. For example, the words "An honest man is the true gentleman" are received with a continued volley of genuine applause. This feature may readily be observed by any casual visitor to our minor theatres, and is enough on which to ground the hope that the introduction of a higher class of dramatic entertainments in place of the trashy melo-dramas and plays of the "Robert Macaire" and "Jack Sheppard" school would help on the elevation of the masses.

Taking such scenes as those above described as a fair sample of the amusements provided at places thronged by boys and girls of the humbler classes, can it be wondered that juvenile crime is one of the foulest pests by which this town and country are ravaged?

CHAPTER II.

THE great annual carnival for the people of Liverpool, held at Aintree, in July, attracts to the town, as the season approaches, numbers of travelling menageries, aerial machines, hobby-horses, swinging-boats, and booths, accompanied by bands of that noble brotherhood better recognised as strolling players, most of whom are wretchedly ragged, and miserably foot-sore, by reason of their disinterested, benevolent, and patriotic wanderings through "the tangled paths of the Thespian fields." The recreation which such an assembly affords is eagerly sought after by the youth of both sexes in humble life. We went with the crowd, "to see the shows," at the upper part of Scotland-road, on a Saturday evening, and will attempt a description of the amusements there provided for the masses, and the manner in which the masses appreciated the provision.

On reaching the ground, soon after eight o'clock, we found the greater portion of the swinging boats under way, well filled, the crews boisterous and mirthful. The merry-go-rounds and horses "were off," and the riders, pretending to flog their mimic steeds, spun gaily round, delighted with the excitement. The Eccles-cakes men—"Heads I win and tails you lose"—had their baskets speedily emptied, for they were surrounded by boys whose labours during the week had procured them "spending money," to risk which they were readily induced by the tempting display of the cake basket. The nut-stalls and shooting galleries; the juvenile tumblers and the ancient toffee-men; "the conjuring cripple" and "the pink-eyed twins"; the comical man with one arm and a hook selling straws, and the great Alma Tube Rifle Shooting Gallery; men eating fire, and women beating drums—all commanded a fair share of attention. There were about a thousand persons present, the majority of whom were youths, and, notwithstanding the drizzling rain, this number was being rapidly increased. Boys came in groups. One or two in each group had coppers to spend, and brought with them companions much younger than themselves, who were intended to share their bounty. The first places visited, in nine cases out of ten, were the toffee stalls. The pyramids of amber-coloured sweets, the tins of "plain black," "common yellow," and layers of Everton, were carefully inspected. Having consulted as to which would yield most for the money, a purchase was effected. The sweet morsels were divided among the group, and the little fellows strolled about until pulled up by a gambling stall, a show, or a cake basket. In

many cases the shows had greater attractions than the cakes. The present was lost sight of in the glorious uncertainty of the future. This was not to be wondered at, when it was showily announced that for the low charge of one penny "The celebrated enchantress from Paris, who is here for a few days, will go through her wonderful performances, and conclude each exhibition by winding up the glass globe and showing each person their future partners." In addition to this the proprietor of the booth pointed to a large oil painting suspended over the entrance, on which were represented enormous crocodiles and alligators swallowing men, monkeys as large as horses, reptiles twining round trees and buffaloes, an elephant rescuing from the jaws of a tiger a gentleman in a bright blue coat, red trousers, yellow waistcoat, and large straw hat; birds of the most extraordinary size and plumage, and beasts of an undescrivable character. Tapping his cane smartly on the canvas, the showman cried out—"Here you have birds, beasts, reptiles, and necromancy for the low charge of one penny. There is no delay; the description of animals is now going on." The booth was filling, and we entered.

The interior was about six yards square, and the animals were in small cages on three sides of the apartment. The floor was covered with sawdust, and the smell from the cages was very offensive. A woman was engaged describing this collection of beasts and reptiles to an audience of forty persons, consisting of boys and girls, a few bricklayers' labourers, who smoked short pipes, several swarthy mechanics, and women with children in their arms. The boys and girls, in their anxiety to inspect the animals more closely, crowded on the show-woman, which occasioned much interruption and annoyance, and on the part of the exhibitor a good deal of swearing. She was a sharp-spoken person, bringing her thin lips so closely together at times, that she cut away portions of her words; besides which she was not at all truthful in her description. Holding up a crocodile about eighteen inches long, she said, "This here's the crying halligator from the Nile in Egip. It was hatched in this country, and on that account is one of the most wonderful kewosities ever exhibited to the public. It is the only hanimal as can move its upper jaw, and you will perceive the tongue is a fixtor." She knocked the creature's upper jaw very hard with her knuckles until it opened its mouth to show the fixture. Then, to prove how much she differed from the reptile in this respect, she began to move her tongue very rapidly, as follows:—"It is hatched like a chicken from an egg, and fed like a calf for the first few months on new milk; after that it takes its usual food. Examine

it for yourselves; there is no deception." It was then handed round, and to many of the boys it became an object of great curiosity. Some of the men grumbled about it being so small; this was speedily replied to by the woman observing, "You were chickens yourself once, were n't you? Wait till it reaches its full size, and then get a penn'orth of it." This was unanswerable. Two "crying crocodiles," of similar size and appearance, were then exhibited; then the monkeys, the jackall, the racoon, and a few other animals, were speedily described, and this woman withdrew to make way for the celebrated enchantress from Paris, who immediately presented herself.

In this enchantress we recognised the woman to whom we had paid the admission fee. She was dirty and slovenly in her attire, had a broad yellow face, and a large black eye. The skin had been scratched off one side of her cheek, and her mouth was sadly contused. A bystander noticed her bruised appearance, and thus described it to a companion: "The bark is peeled off her cheek close to the damaged squinter, and her kisser is out of square." Her bonnet, though rough in form and texture, was nevertheless extremely fashionable; there was very little of it, and that little was hanging on the back of her neck. Her dress was black, much worn, more torn, and a good deal draggled about the skirts. Her boots were worn very loosely, and not being laced, a portion of them had got away. Whilst she was collecting the necessary articles for her performance, a tall swarthy Italian, who was organ-grinding at the front of the show, at the command of the enchantress, came inside and favoured the company with an air. Having arranged her cards, tin boxes, tin tubes, iron rings, and a few cups and glasses, she commanded the musician to be still, frowned on the audience, and in a very husky voice, which gave unmistakeable evidence that she was under the influence of liquor, commenced her enchantments. She held up a very dirty pack of cards, and requested that the ladies and gentlemen, as she called them, would do her the favour to take a card from the pack and examine it. Several of the audience did so. They were then asked to return them and place them in the pack without her seeing them. Having done so, she at once told them what card they had taken out, and what it denoted. To a poor, bare-headed, bare-footed Irish woman, who had taken out "Nine of Spades," the enchantress thus spake,—“Ah! I see (turning over the cards); that denotes you are of a very hasty temper, and have many quarrels with your husband, which will in the end promote your prosperity. You are contemplating a journey across the sea, but you will in a few days receive a letter which will cause you to

forego the journey, and your luck in life will depend upon the way you act." To a young girl who had drawn the "Seven of Hearts:"—"That denotes that you will be deceived in the object of your choice, and your reliance on the young man with fair hair will endanger your peace of mind. But, mark well what I say, it may be of service to you; many ladies of the land have profited by my counsel; so may you. After a good deal of trouble you will be married to a dark young man, whom you have not yet seen; will be very prosperous, and have a family of four boys and five girls." This pleasing prospect caused the girl to blush deeply, and the audience to applaud loudly. A neatly attired, good-looking girl (evidently a domestic servant out on an errand, for she appeared to hold money in her hand, and had a small dish which she attempted to conceal by her apron), had been attracted by the announcement of having her future partner pointed out, and came in just when the cards were being drawn. She drew the "Jack of Clubs," and was scowled on and thus addressed—"I see, madam, you need not try to deceive me. You must be very careful how you act towards the dark young man who is keeping company with you, and to whom you are so much attached; for, depend upon it, he"—— The girl appeared to dread what was coming, and, running out of the booth, lost the benefit to be derived from the advice of the enchantress. To an old man who had drawn the "Queen of Hearts," this woman's remarks were filthy and obscene, and in several cases she used language that was abominable, although surrounded by boys and girls. Anything more senseless and disgusting than this drunken woman's indecent talk cannot be conceived. Yet the attention paid to it by some, and the reliance which appeared to be placed on it by others, revealed a want of common sense and a dearth of intelligence deeply to be deplored. The enchantress next performed a few conjuring tricks, and professed her ability to produce from a box anything that she might require, or whatever the audience would suggest. A man suggested that she should obtain for herself a better pair of boots; but the "impertinent fellow" was in very strong and indignant terms told to "go home and turn the mangle for his mother"—a rebuff which the boys relished immensely. The temper of the performer being considerably ruffled, her tricks did not present very great attractions. She therefore poured what appeared to be water into a tin cup, and handed it round, saying, "Will any of you oblige me by taking a little gin and water? You see I have had enough; come, now, oblige me by taking a little." No one appearing disposed to oblige her, she abruptly turned round, saying, "My performance is at an end," and immediately called out as loudly as

she could, "They are coming out." This was the signal for a woman at the door to thump a large gong, the organist to strike up the "Ratcatcher's Daughter," and a boy to hammer away on the big drum. Amidst such din as these instruments, vigorously plied, can produce, we turned out of the tent of the enchantress. The glass globe we never saw, and we regret to say the birds spoken of by the proprietor had no existence but on the canvas.

The booths and boats were now beginning to light their naphtha lamps. A large oil painting of a dog with five legs, another with three, a flying kangaroo, and a cat with three legs, attracted multitudes. The admission being only one penny, we paid the fee and passed in with the crowd. The place was similar in arrangement to that we had just left. It was speedily filled with young people; and a woman with a cane in her hand, much crumpled in her attire, and smelling very strongly of peppermint, came forward to describe what she called "the kewosities of lucious nature," pointing her cane to the cases as she passed on. Her description ran thus:—"This here is the leaping lemoth; this here is the jackal, or lion's provider; this here is a racoon, or flying kangaroo; this here is the Egyptian sand-dog, from Alexander—it has no hair, and is considered by them as knows a great kewosity." It appeared to us a small Italian greyhound, that had just received what some of the audience wanted—a clean shave. "This here is the rosy ringtailed monkey, or the whistler of the woods; this here is a kitten with three legs, born in Sheffield, and is ten weeks old to-night—it *drinks milk*, and lives with the rosy ringtail, and sometimes with the sand-dog, in perfect harmony; these here are two pale-faced baboons—they have got cold with our moving about so much, and their voices are not so clear; and now I'll show you the dogs, which are considered by everybody to be the most wonderful efforts of nature." The dog with three legs was first brought out, and the poor thing seemed delighted to get from the cage and run round amidst the audience. The dog with five legs was then allowed the same privilege. The dogs on the canvas were very different from the dogs in the show; yet, notwithstanding the deception practised, the audience seemed pleased, and retired apparently satisfied. The whole exhibition did not occupy more than ten minutes.

We now rambled among the swinging boats. The rain was pouring down, yet this did not prevent the boats from going up gaily. The death of a poor creature, caused by the breaking down of a boat but the day before, was apparently never thought of by this gathering. The machines and boats were all profusely decorated,

brilliant in colour, and many of them exhibited improvement in form. A few old Liverpool boats were here, and, with the carters and their damsels, maintained their accustomed popularity. The Ariel boat machines were rendered very attractive, and were moved by a small winch, which obviated the necessity of rope pulling. Each boat was covered by an awning, which protected the passengers from rain, and caused them, if only as a means of shelter, to be well filled. "General Marmora," "Marshal Pelissier," "Omar Pasha," and "Lord Raglan," each carrying sixteen persons, ascended and descended very gracefully. The groups in these attained their elevation at the risk of their necks; yet to see the pitiful and condescending glances they bestowed on the ragged crowd of lookers-on beneath suggested views of life and phases of class distinction that rendered the scene, in a social and moral point of view, worth thinking over. The hobby horses were the smartest we ever saw. They were newly painted, and their trappings and decorations indicated considerable outlay. Their names were in most cases displayed in gold letters on the side of the neck—one set being distinguished by the names of celebrated racers, the other by those of reigning monarchs or living statesmen. The characteristics or peculiarities of the persons were attempted to be shown in such fashion. For instance, we observed "Clarendon" was intensely verdant in colour, "Palmerston" was a dappled gray, "Eugenie" was a bright yellow with red eyes, "Victoria" was a genuine true blue, with a fine hazel eye and flowing mane. "Lord John Russell" was a very small horse, the merest pony, with only one eye. Just before him was a couch or seat for two persons, called "the treasury bench," and the one eye of the small horse looked intently on this. The proprietor was a pleasant, communicative little fellow. In speaking of his merry-go-round, he said, "The osses as I have cost more nor any osses ever did afore; and besides, they are nearer to natur than anything as was ever seed: they have legs and heads the proper shape; and if you come to look at 'em closely, you will find they have the veins in." He told us further that it was not his intention to go to the racecourse, adding, significantly, "We can do a good regular business here for some time. The lads in a town like this must have their fun. The races will last only three days, and moving such a stock of osses as I have might cost as much as I would earn." He had a large number of boys under the machine pushing it round, and he rewarded their efforts by a ride on the horses. Whenever the boys began to lag, he called out, "Now, lads, three cheers for the battle of Inkerman," and he led the cheers himself; the boys became excited, and the machine was whirled round with great rapidity. This fat philosopher further

stated that he could always get English boys to work well if he reminded them of a fight.

It was very amusing to witness the boys on the horses. Foundry lads, shopboys, sweeps, brickfield boys, and little pickers-up of unconsidered trifles, sitting erect, some spurring, some flogging, some patting the necks of their steeds to calm their tempers, many ringing the small bells which were attached to the horses, and all of them shouting and hurrahing, thus creating a din which it is impossible to describe. It was now after ten o'clock, and the rain came down in torrents. Yet this seemed in no way to decrease the attendance either at the shows or the swinging-boats. We reached one boat—the smallest, the dirtiest, and yet the most attractive on the ground, if we could judge by the crowd that surrounded it, or the number of visitors with which it was filled. The riotous conduct of the young men and women riveted the gaze of all beholders. The young men had taken off their coats and jackets to cover the heads and shoulders of the girls, and these couples were thus huddled “under the pladdie,” singing in concert a ribald song, which was interrupted frequently by the disgusting conduct and disgraceful language of men and girls. Boys were here pulling at the ropes, and listening to and laughing at the conversation and coarse jokes of the crowd. Young girls were dragging youths up to the boats, and entreating them to “just have another ha’porth before we go home.” Middle-aged men, with market-baskets in their hands, and their wives in company, stopped on their way home to gaze at the scene. And yet, late as it was, the revel continued with undiminished vigour. Drunken men and women now rolled about, rendering the spectacle more shocking, and adding depth to the depravity already noticed. Here were hundreds of children prowling about at this late hour—many ragged and shoeless, all dirty and mischievous. The pranks they played amongst themselves, the tricks they practised on the showmen, proved that their education in vicious habits had not been neglected, and would here be further improved. Where are the homes of this tattered multitude? Where are their parents? What sort of control have they over their children? How do they exercise it? What example do they exhibit to their offspring? These questions fully answered would show the true sources of juvenile criminality.

The week's toil was being brought to a close. In a few hours the dawn of the day of rest would appear, and drunken riot and immoral revelling were preparing thousands to “hail the sacred day.” As we stood in Kirkdale-road, taking a last look at this pandemonium of licentiousness, we were joined by several persons

who expressed their surprise—nay, indignation—at having, on their way home each evening, to witness such a scene. The murky atmosphere, the lurid glare of the lamps, the din of musical instruments, the calls of the nutmen, the cheers of the boys at the horses, the cursing of girls at their companions, at the rain, at anything, the cracking of rifles, the beating of gongs, the singing in the boats, the yellings and commotion of the motley gathering, constituted, to our mind, a preparation for the Sabbath the result of which, to some extent, would be clearly seen at the Police-court on Monday morning.

CHAPTER III.

HAVING described the preparations made for the Aintree carnival, attention is now earnestly requested to the carnival itself. The term “races” is seldom or never used now. “The Aintree Meeting,” “The Autumn Meeting,” “The Spring Meeting,” &c., may frequently be heard of; but it is not respectable to speak of “The Aintree *ruces*.” This may to some extent be accounted for by the fact that the majority of persons who assemble at such class of sports go not so much for the races alone as for other associations which may there be formed. Hence it becomes a meeting-place for all sorts of characters. A “meeting,” therefore, let it be called; but the public should know of what this meeting consists.

Amongst all classes of society in Liverpool the great gatherings at Aintree are looked forward to with a degree of interest which is at once remarkable and instructive. The errand boy or young apprentice will at this time obtain a holiday, and having, perhaps, “saved up” his pence for the purpose, will for a few hours in the year have an opportunity of enjoying the fresh air and tumbling on the green sward of the pleasant meadows about Aintree. Mechanics, young and old, think and talk about the races as an event in their life, and it is no uncommon thing in workshops to find money clubs formed, or saving boxes established, in order that when the day arrives the long looked-for and dearly loved spree may be entered upon with ample means to secure its usual termination. There are no other sports of a public, open-air character held anywhere else within an easy distance of Liverpool: hence the great popularity of the Aintree carnival. In Manchester, and many other manufacturing and large towns, days—yea, weeks—are periodically set apart for the recreation and enjoyment of the people. In Liverpool it is not so. Here bankers, merchants, brokers, clerks, shopmen, business

men of all grades, and handicraftsmen of all trades and every position in life, have to work away from year to year in a dreary round of never-ending toil, the only recreations provided for them being those of that vicious and soul-destroying character which have been laid before the public in the former series of these papers. The desire for recreation, amusement, or excitement implanted within the human mind is, when properly used, directed, and controlled, calculated to exercise a most-beneficial effect, socially and morally. It is only when the desire for amusement becomes a *passion* that it proves dangerous to individuals or society. There is no necessity why even a horse-race might not be a healthful, invigorating pastime and rural sport. If it were properly conducted it might prove so. It is now surrounded by vicious practices, and mixed up with questionable pursuits, which have totally destroyed its original and simple character.

The mode of transit to Aintree has of late years undergone a complete change. Time was when the large "float," the spring cart, the gaily decorated coach, were all brought into requisition to convey the visitors to the race-ground. A trip to Aintree in a water-side cart, covered with an awning, a fiddler sitting on the front, and a couple of damsels dancing in the centre, was something to remember and talk about. But the road has had, in this case, as in many others, to give way to the rail. Instead of the crack of the driver's whip, you hear the railway guard's whistle, and the iron road now monopolises the principal traffic. There are, however, many persons who, in this respect as in others, cling with tenacity to the remnants of antiquity, and would as soon think of going to church, voting for a radical, or leaving off the orange neckerchief, as they would of going to the races by rail. To such persons the spring cart is a chief delight. The cushions round the sides, the red ribbons in the horses' "blinkers," the sturdy, independent, and not unfrequently indecorous behaviour of the driver, and the rattling pace at which the horse is made to go, constitute a great portion of the enjoyment. Then again, by rail there is no stopping "to get a gill." You are crammed into a box, and whirled over streets and through a tunnel, and are at the course without any fun. By the road, and with a spring cart, you pull up at Walton, and perhaps at the Throstle-nest, again at the Black Bull, and whatever be obtained to drink is never allowed to settle—the jogging of the cart prevents that; hence you reach the course in a tolerably excited state, and are in such manner prepared to enjoy the sports that await you. Contrast this with going by rail.

It is between twelve and one o'clock. The crush at the railway

station is great, but the temper of the crowd is all that can be desired. A continued stream of passengers is pouring into the station, anticipated pleasure depicted on every countenance. The tickets obtained at the booking-office are taken by a porter at the entrance of the platform. By this arrangement time is saved, but the company *save* nothing else. As fast as the carriages can be brought up they are filled, and trains are being despatched every five minutes. "Here's room for one." "Take your seats, gentlemen." The train is in motion; still people press into the carriages. "There is no room here, sir." "Is n't there, though?" and in goes another, until, "Now they are off," and away they go. The carriage is calculated to hold thirty-two persons; here are in it *forty-five*, many of them not *thin*, huddled together, some sitting on others' knees, and several standing in a stooping position. Everybody says "it's terribly close;" and "if there should be a smash, won't the company be in for it," is a sentiment strongly expressed by a half-drunken tailor, who sings, "Down among the dead men," and other equally cheering allusions, as the train passes through the Walton tunnel. This state of Calcutta black-holeism does not continue long, for in a few minutes the course is reached, and the change from the close carriage to the purer air of Aintree is very agreeable. The day is beautifully fine; the visitors were never so numerous. Carts, cars, whitechaps, and omnibuses are passing the "Sefton Arms," laden with passengers from town. Troops of pedestrians trudge on, their jackets being carried under their arms, their shoes white with dust, their faces black and glossy with a mixture of dust and perspiration. A large calico placard attracts everybody's attention. It is supported by two poles, and is watched over by two men, who, besides the discharge of this duty, distribute tracts to the passers-by. The placard displays, in very large characters, "*Remember Poor Palmer*," which excites criticism and condemnation. Go down the road, and pass in at the entrance leading immediately to the back of the grand stand. Here is a man with a basket of books, which he calls "The prize of your high calling, fourpence each." They are Testaments. Close by him is a stout, active, loud-spoken man, asking every one if he has obtained permission from his minister to visit such a place. He distributes tracts to all who will take them. The ground for several yards around is strewn with tracts. On the gatepost is a small bill warning itinerant preachers and their followers off the course, and threatening prosecution for disobedience. Just here the cars, carts, &c., are packed closely together, the horses taken out, and the grooms attending to them. Here is a very primitive tent—a float covered with a waterproof wrapper, seats along the

sides and across the bottom, and two barrels of ale are being tapped, which will be sold and "consumed on the premises." But pass on towards the grand stand; and now you are at once in the region where tents and turfites most do congregate. The bustle of business has commenced; crowds of people from every class in life move about over the fields, amongst the meat-stalls, into the booths, and round by the hobby-horses.

Here are upwards of forty tents or booths fitted up for the sale of liquors. The bars of many are garnished by boiled hams and rounds of beef, large cones of sandwiches and baskets of crackers being added in some cases. The proprietor and his lady are in most cases behind the bar dispensing the meat and drink. Waiters—males with white bibbed aprons, females with lustrously bedecked caps—glide about with trays and glasses. The proprietors of these booths lay claim to the friendship of the visitors by announcing on their signs where they hail from, and it is amusing to observe that even in these matters clanship and class distinction prevail. Walk into a tent the host of which hails from an inland town, say Bolton. Notice the men sitting here on flimsily constructed seats, holding small cups of ale or porter in their hands, and many of them munching bread and cheese. What a contrast they exhibit to the visitors in the adjoining tent, over which is a representation of the "green immortal shamrock," and in large letters the motto "Faugh-a-ballagh." There is no sitting down here. The old fiddler is perched on a barrel in the corner. Near him is laid a board, about three feet wide and eight feet long: this is the "footboard," on which are two girls, smartly dressed, and a man without a jacket, footing it in a three-handed reel. The visitors crowd round to criticise the "stepping." The heat of the day, combined with the nature of the sport, causes the girls to throw off their shawls. They are determined to dance the man down, and he is equally determined to knock either them or the fiddler up, and there will be no cessation until one or other of these feats be accomplished. There is here no eating, but a good deal of smoking and drinking, and further on in the day fighting will be in favour. As a still more striking contrast, look in at this tent, devoted to the members of the "canine fancy;" the keeper of it has a good dog, and is himself said to be "no pup." The dog is chained to the side of the bar, and the scars with which the creature's head is covered are looked on with admiration by the men around, or rather the race of incorrigible scoundrels here assembled, standing with their hands in their coat pockets and biting their lips, wishing some one would "stand a quart." How suspiciously they look on any stranger that enters!

Or look at the tents devoted to pugilism or pedestrianism, for there are on this occasion several. At one of these the champion displays his belt very ostentatiously on the front of the bar, and young men go in to obtain drink in order that they may have an opportunity of inspecting the trophy. Pugilists come in here to refresh themselves, for there is a sparring booth close by, and "Con Quin" persuades a "novice," whom he has been battering about the head for the last five minutes, that "porter is the best stuff for making you plucky." Thereupon the "novice," a young fellow, said to be an American, but who looked and spoke like a "genuine native," paid for two pints of porter, and thus rewarded the pugilist for cutting his cheek slightly and tearing the collar off his shirt! What were the character and object of those beings who threw sops to Cerberus? Thus it is the tents are laid out that almost every class or profession may meet with congenial spirits or old familiar faces, whilst indulging in the "draughts of liquid friendship and solid comforts" that are said here largely to abound. As a rosy-cheeked carter said, "It's just like a Saturday night at home, a fellow meets with so many as he knows."

Between the row of tents and the back of the brick stands, a sort of street is formed, in the centre of which are bread and meat stalls. One of these, the attendants at which are more dirty and slovenly than their neighbours, is called a "soup-house." Many young lads seem to relish the hot liquid. The soup manufacture is carried on close by the edge of the pit, where the horses are led to drink. A knowledge of this fact might affect the sale of the article. A tall, fierce-looking man is engaged cutting up bread and ham at one of the stalls, and his cry of "three pence a slice; carry it off, my hearties," meets with a ready response. Near this is a camera obscura, to attract visitors to which a conjuror is engaged to go through a few tricks of sleight-of-hand. An invitation is given to two county policemen "just to have a peep," and they accept of the polite offer, and come out recommending the camera to the notice of the crowd. But the great attraction on this part of the ground is the sparring booths. There are two—one supported by purely native talent; the other is much more pretentious in appearance, and the names of celebrated men are mentioned as "just going to set to," beyond which the celebrated pugilists are brought on to the platform in professional costume and exhibited to the multitude. The Liverpool men have not so much to say as their professional brother from Manchester, and they find it to their advantage to drown his talk by plying a large watchman's rattle, the din caused by which destroys the effect of Johnny Magrath's eloquence. The

admission to these booths is twopence each, and it is much to be regretted that on every occasion they seemed to fill.

Here is a tent for the accommodation of another class—more respectable people—at the corner of the road, opposite the entrance to the grand stand. Look in here, and it will be seen more clearly what are the enjoyments provided for the people in every grade of life. This tent is very gay-looking in the interior. The bar is tastefully decorated. A very aristocratic title is suspended over the entrance. At the back part of the tent is a sort of select chamber or private room. Young girls and women are here—their faces daubed with paint, their persons profusely adorned with highly coloured dresses. They pass the time in drinking, laughing, and giggling with men—with merchants who on the Exchange and at home pass for gentlemen. The company at this booth is so very aristocratic and fashionable, the conduct so indecorous and unbecoming, that a crowd of persons in the humbler walks of life are attracted by the exhibition, and gaze on, as well they may, with astonishment. A spring-cart driver in the crowd says—“*Well, s’ help me! if we was to pull our molls about so, the bobby would jug us.*” The response of a butcher is “That ’s about the size of it.” This tent is stated to be established by the notorious brothel-keeper and procuress, Madame ——. Her name does not appear, but her person does behind the bar; and a young gentleman in a very loose coat, and whose conversation is more loose still, sips wine with this bloated and brazen-faced hussey. And active as this young man may be on the Exchange in the morning, when cotton is on the carpet, leering and simpering as he is now, he will in all probability meet his mother and sisters in the evening without a blush. They are all male waiters at this tent, and outside are a couple of suspicious-looking attendants. There they are, walking backwards and forwards as if on the look-out for somebody, and not in any way appearing to be connected with this rendezvous. These are bruisers, or bullies, ready to adjust—of course in an amicable way—whatever little differences may arise, or to remove, by their gentle mode of entreaty, any gentleman who may render himself obnoxious to the visitors. They have been refreshed with sundry draughts of ale or porter, and are now smoking short pipes. One of the waiters, seeing the crowd increase—the observations from which are not agreeable—is winking to the bruisers to get the people away. So move off!

Just step across to the entrance of the grand stand, and notice the vendors of race cards. “A card, gentlemen, a card; names, weights, and colours of the riders. Take a correct card, gentlemen sportsmen.” These persons differ widely from the vendors to be

met with in town. Here they are all females, with sunburnt faces, gaudily trimmed bonnets, bright-coloured plaid shawls, white aprons, and shoes with buckles. They are not gentle in their manners, nor do they appear virtuous or sober in their habits, yet they seem to be on good and intimate terms with many aristocratic members of the ring, who are passing in and out of the stand. Notice the peculiar telegraphic communications which are carried on between them and some stylishly dressed touts who are in the background. These characters do not depend on race cards alone for their living, but use the sale of cards as a cloak to hide their iniquitous practices. They have large pockets about them filled with filthy and obscene prints, which they sell at high prices, and by such means pander to the taste of many to be found at such gatherings—men whose sole aim and object in life appear to be indulgence in gross sensuality and animal pleasure.

Pass down the row of drinking, sparring, and dancing booths, and here is the field devoted to shows, merry-go-rounds, swinging boats, three-sticks-a-penny, &c. There are no theatrical booths. The tinselled Thespians confine themselves to town. There are no travelling menageries, and very few swinging boats; but what there are seem to be doing a great business. The space in former years devoted to shows is now devoted to donkey racing, and this sport affords much amusement to young and old. The races are very short ones, the riders not very active, and the donkeys are not abused. Good humour and innocent mirth are the rule. Lower down, nearer the plantation, are groups on the grass, enjoying a pic-nic. Gaily dressed country cousins ramble about with the bottoms of their trousers and the cuffs of their coats turned up, carrying the everlasting blue umbrella, such a hot day as this, and eating away at the real Ormskirk gingerbread. Pass the bottom stand, and ramble up between the stands and the course: what a busy and exciting scene! Here are gingerbread stalls, with healthy-looking women presiding over them—there are nut-barrows, and perambulating shooting galleries, with sickly, drunken-looking fellows as proprietors; here are men and women with three-sticks-a-penny—there are young, suspicious-looking men selling “cigars and a light;” here are Chinese jugglers forming a ring for the exercise of their profession—there are a shoal of young pickpockets fully prepared to exercise theirs, whether the ring be formed or not; here are men and women standing on stools singing ballads shamefully indecent, and the crowd of well-dressed men around patronise the ribaldry by purchasing the songs; here are soldiers, smart, dashing-looking fellows, their caps bedecked with ribbons, and bearing on their

breasts the emblems of their bravery—there are men destitute of legs, soliciting alms; here are a blind man selling lucifer matches, and a man with one arm selling religious tracts. Crowds are passing into the booths; hundreds are passing out and on to the stands. The bustle is becoming greater—the bell rings for saddling; and now prepare for the race.

CHAPTER IV.

THE bell is ringing, and preparations are now being made for the race. On quickly to the grand stand; elbow your way through the crowd of pleasure-seekers as you best can; pass round the gingerbread stalls, the American ice cream manufactory, the vendors of walking sticks, and notice, as you approach the enclosure, the groups of disreputable-looking men that are settling down to their business. These are betting men from all parts of the country, comprising all shades of character. The enclosure before the grand stand is called the betting ring. The railings are white on the inside, but black and slabby without. They have just received a fresh coat of tar, which must prove extremely pleasant to the olfactory nerves of the ragged touts and kicked-out stable scamps who pass their time in peering through the palings, and receive a whisper now and then which they are not long in turning to account. Here, at the outside of the betting ring, but as near it as they are permitted to come, are assembled the lowest class of turfites: they are now very numerous and noisy, closely packed, shouting, and offering odds. They extend from the corner of the stands to the course; and it is lamentable to find amongst this degraded crowd so many men to whom the public give credit for purer practices and better sense. Here is a group that have subscribed a sum sufficient to obtain admission for “one of the lot” within the sacred precincts of the ring: hence their reason for keeping so very close to the palings. How the young man with the loose drab coat curses the *tar*—how heartily he says he could kick Topham. That man inside, with the dark tweed suit and cap to match, with a face strongly indicative of those practices which are said to produce “cheeks which shame the rose’s hue,” is the person on whom this group rely for obtaining the “right office.” See—he comes from the centre of the enclosure towards where “his lot” are standing, and whispers what he has learned in the ear of the stout man with a wall eye, who “gives the office” to the others, and this group is dispersed; the members of it

now walk, or rather crush, their way into the crowd of duffers, loafers, and men who live at the outskirts of honesty, loudly proclaiming what they are prepared to back or lay against. But pass on—never mind the generous offers of the slender youth who shakes a bag of half-crowns in the face of passers-by: he never earned the money, nor is it his own. Never mind the flaunting of feathers or the rustling of silks hereabouts. Never mind the procession of painted prostitutes that are just now passing from their carriage to the tents: press on, the ring is fast filling. Show your tickets. "That will do, sir." The ring is before you.

The crowd of well-dressed men in the ring is very great, but it will be greater presently. Look! here the turfites come from the refreshment-room: all the strongly marked peculiarities of the racing and betting fraternity may now be seen. The bustle is beginning, the books are in hand. The Manchester men and the Liverpool gentlemen are easily distinguished. The stand is fast filling. Many handsome-looking, elegantly-dressed ladies, accompanied by tall, hirsute, fashionably-attired men, take up positions for viewing the race. The gentlemen have opera glasses, in cases, slung across their shoulders. The glasses are handed to the ladies, and the gentlemen look patronisingly around. The horses destined to contend for the stakes are now being led round the enclosure—their numbers are already on the telegraph. The favourites are closely scanned and scrutinised by the practised eye of many competent judges, and their appearance and form are spoken of by these gentlemen in the usual slang of the turf. The excitement is beginning in the ring—listen to the murmur, then the roll, then the burst from the betting men. How thronged the place is—the meeting is "well and fashionably attended." Here are earls, viscounts, noble lords, honourable captains, gallant admirals, members of Parliament, magistrates, aldermen, town councillors, merchants, brokers, publicans, business men of every grade, and many men of questionable character; the comfortable easy-going country gentleman; and several representatives of the fourth estate. Many of the men here have, as magistrates, presided at county sessions lately; others have spoken at public meetings on the duty of making earnest efforts to purify and regenerate society. Several have been found on platforms, supporting, either by their presence, purse, or advocacy, missions to the benighted heathen, the Additional Curates', the Pastoral Aid, or Home Church Building Societies; and some of them will, no doubt, if they succeed to-day, stand an extra dozen of champagne in the evening, or make a very handsome donation to some religious or benevolent association. There are men here who have the noble ambition to become

statesmen, guided, no doubt, by the principle that if they have the ability to direct the national sports, they ought to be entrusted with the power to control or guide the national councils. The jockeys mount; the horses pass from the enclosure on to the course and walk down, then gallop up and past the stand, preparatory to starting for the prize. Now the excitement amongst the bookmakers and backers is at its height. Innocent recreation, rational enjoyment, rural sport are unknown amidst this infatuated gathering. Look at the anxious faces and the highly nervous excitement manifest on all sides. Groups are formed; these speedily become enlarged, or dwindle away and become lost in greater groups, where the odds offered secure more attention. The cry is raised—"They are off;" the groups are broken suddenly up, and all eyes are directed to the horses, which are seen running down towards the canal turn; passing this, the pace quickens, and the positions undergo some change. The horses now close together, pass into the straight run home, and the excitement becomes more general. All the stands appear well filled; the course, half-way down, is lined with spectators two or three deep; gentlemen on smart cobs are rattling along the ploughed gallop. Enlivened by the beauty of the day, the whole scene is brilliant, gay, and picturesque. Now the vast sea of faces is turned towards the distance-chair, near which the beautiful creatures are struggling for the mastery. On, on they come—you hear the rattle of their hoofs; the pace is good, the goal is near, and the feelings of the spectators find vent in such phrases as "Blue has it;" "No, he has n't, yellow has it;" "Not he;" "Go it, yellow, the stake's your own;" and the horses, whipped, and spurred, and bleeding, pass the winning-post with the fleetness of an arrow. In a few moments the numbers of the first, second, and third are suspended on the telegraph, and immense sums of money have been lost and won.

The race over, the vast body of spectators break in upon the course, and there is a general rush to look at the winner. As the horse is walked down to the enclosure the people press upon it, and the aid of a couple of police is required to form a passage. The stable-boys, with bottles and clothes, are in attendance, ready to wrap the animal up when the saddle is taken off. The horse which the "talent" have been operating about has won, therefore, within the ring his appearance does not excite so much attention. The turfites clear off; the ring is speedily cleared, so is the stand; the refreshment-room is visited, and men look cautiously over their books whilst indulging in brandy, soda-water, and cigars. The "great event" forms the subject of general conversation. Whilst preparations are being made for the next race, stroll around amongst the

tents and stalls, and notice how the visitors pass their time and amuse themselves.

Do not stay now to try your strength, or test your weight, or discover what you well know. Go round by the upper part of the enclosure, cross the course, jump over the railings, and get across the ploughed gallop and into the centre of the oval. There are here two tents apart from all the rest, and, as might be supposed from their situation, not likely to do much business. This is a mistake. They are thronged with respectable (?) men. Go to the bar of the first tent and ask for a glass of anything. There is no getting near the bar; the calls for drink of all sorts are more numerous than can be responded to, notwithstanding there are three male and two female waiters, and the host behind the bar. Go into the next tent. The crowd is here the same; the supply of drink is not equal to the demand. Go forward, or rather to the back part of the tent. There is a small apartment—a canvas screen protects the visitors from the gaze of the vulgar crowd; lift the screen: are you surprised? “Come in, come in,” cry half a dozen damsels. “what are you going to stand?” The waiter is opening a bottle of champagne, and a young man, who displays a republican and wears spectacles, hands a sovereign in payment. Do the obscene remarks of the women offend the visitors here? not at all; this is what they seek. The Aintree “meeting” affords them extensive gratification in this way. Here publicly, in face of day, men can display their utter want of common decency, and by their conduct induce the poor unfortunate outcasts to display their utter want of modesty or shame. Turn away, turn away, the sight is shocking! Look again at the bar. It is hard to conceive that there are about fifty other refreshment booths, all perhaps thronged, although few of them possess attractions of the character to be seen here.

Close by this is the archery ground; a dark-eyed woman is engaged practising, and, as she says, “teaching the young idea and the sporting gents how to shoot.” “Only fourpence a dozen; have four penn’orth, gentlemen sportsmen, and learn in time, whilst you have opportunity, how to hit the bull’s eye.” Near her is a young man engaged in a similar pursuit, but he has not so much to say as the lady. Young and old men try their hand, and evidently draw the bow at a venture. The only thing surprising about their shooting is how they manage to keep so far from the target. The old sailor with the two stout girls in company is loudly laughed at by the spectators; still he declares the fault is not in his aim—it is now the bow, then the arrow, next it slipped, or the sun is in his eyes, or he is afraid of hitting a dog that is near; it could n’t be his fault, “for when I

was in Africa last voyage but one I shot so many ostriches that the king of the tribe gave me fourteen elephants' teeth to drop it and go home!" Hallo, they are clearing the course; rush on, and get across to the stand, or you will miss the great event—the race for the cup. The people are taking up their positions at each side of the course; little boys, hundreds of them, lie down on the grass and put their heads between the legs of the men who stand over them. "Mount up, gentlemen, mount up; two-pence each; you can see all round the course for two-pence." This is the cry from men and women who have erected crazy-looking stands down the side of the railings, a few yards from the edge of the course; and these are being covered with all classes, anxious to witness the event which has attracted such multitudes from afar. No persons but simple-hearted Irishmen, entirely innocent of any idea of the strength of material or the principles of construction, could venture to solicit persons to "crowd up." Look at the supports of that stand; the legs have been broken in two places, but the good-natured proprietor says, "Sure, the rope 'll hould, and are n't I houlding on myself?" And there he is at one end and his wife at the other, helping to support the "royal stand," on which are many persons, some of whom might have been expected to set more value on their lives or limbs, seeing the families they have left at home. Get on, get on. How they are crowding on to the stands—there never was such a sight. "Admission to the stand, two shillings." "Go up"—"It's all very fine to say go up," says a worthy doctor: "can I go through the people?" "Don't lose your temper, if you neglect your patients," says a hearty fellow, who winks knowingly at his companion. The doctor feels this, and is silent. Up you go; there you are, on the top of the stand.

The scene from here is surprising. The course is clear, with the exception of *that* dog which is sure to run up, and be driven back, and hallooed down, and kicked across, until, driven to desperation, it rushes amongst the crowd that is gathering at the turn just above the judge's chair, and is seen no more until the next race. But notice the people around. The stand is crowded, and medical men are numerous. Surely they have not come to bleed people; they do enough of that in town. Do they expect accidents, and are looking out for work? Not at all. They know the value of excitement, and it is now getting up in earnest, and the doctors look pleased. Look over the back of the stands. There you look down on the whole of the tents. See the crowds moving in and out, up and down, to and fro, notwithstanding that the great race is now coming off. But what care these thousands for the races? Nothing; they never

come to Aintree for the races. It is a "Meeting." And look at the back of the tent below. Two men, drunk and cursing each other's eyes, are pulling off their clothes to fight, whilst the friends of each support their man, and back him to "lick the other blind." They get out of sight. And now look at that man playing the bagpipes, and his two children, dressed in Highland costume, dancing. Look at those women regaling themselves in the uncovered portion of the tent just beneath. Listen to their remarks when they find out that they are observed. Notice the woman who beats her child so unmercifully because the poor little fellow will cry by reason of the pain caused by the filthy liquor she has given him to drink. Medical men—there are seven of you here, eminent in your respective walks—why not some of you go down and tell that infatuated mother why her child cries? tell her also what her child may become by such a training. Never mind the race, you are not interested in the turf, and your noble profession ought to interest you in saving human life. But you have come to see the race: very well, look at it; next week will bring you plenty of patients—you know that right well.

The horses are now leaving the enclosure; only seven will start—"Wild Huntsman was scratched at 1.30."* They will start from the bottom of the course, consequently will pass the stands twice. "I'll lay against Typee;" "I'll lay against Brother to Gray Tommy;" "I'll lay against Marchioness;" "I'll lay against Vandal;" "I'll lay against Pretty Boy," is the cry on all sides. Men that do not appear to be worth a shilling—sunburnt fellows, with well-worn clothes—pass half-crowns and sovereigns about, and jingle many more. One of our medical friends joins in a half-crown sweep—seven members; he has by this an interest in the race to the amount of fifteen shillings. The horses seem long in starting, but at last down drops the flag, and "they are off." It's a good start, and here they come. They pass the stands "all of a ruck," turn the stable corner, and then the pace improves; and as the positions undergo some change, the glasses are brought into requisition on the grand stand. How eagerly they are watched now by hundreds whose very existence, in a pecuniary sense, depends upon

* In addition to the practice of scratching horses at the last hour, look at the trickery practised at the recent Hoylake meeting. For some time only three numbers were hoisted up on the telegraph for the Hoylake Handicap, and the betting opened at 5 to 4 against Our Sal, who was afterwards backed against the field at evens, when, to the surprise and dismay of her supporters, Miss Harkaway began to be talked about as a runner, and at the last moment her number was hoisted, when she immediately became the favourite at 3 to 1 on her against the field. Such "dodges" are said to be frequently resorted to at obscure meetings.

the result of the race. They are getting near the canal turn, when crash goes the Irishman's grand stand, amidst screams of fright and curses of indignation. Just now a fellow crushes past the doctors, and hurriedly leaves the stand. Are some of his friends injured by the fall of "the twopenny?" or can it be that he is a thief making off with his booty? Why does he sacrifice the view of this "beautiful race," if it be not to succour the suffering or to flee from justice? But no one thinks of anything but the race now, for the horses are coming up. "Tom Thumb is beaten off;" "Brother to Gray Tommy looks well in;" "Typee is beaten—Typee is beaten," roar hundreds of excited men; "Lady Tatton has it—Lady Tatton has it;" "No, no;" "Now, Fordham, go it;" "Call on your horse—lift him in;" "He has it;" "It's Pretty Boy—it's Pretty Boy;" "It's Tatton;" "It's not—it's Pretty Boy;" "Hurrah, hurrah." Caps are twirled, hats are waved by winners, and there is a wholesale rush from the stand. The numbers are soon up—Pretty Boy first, Lady Tatton second. Pigeons, with ribbons round their necks, and some with ribbons streaming from their tails, are tossed up from the betting ring, and after performing a few circles over the stands they fly off, bearing with them weal or woe to thousands.

A good-looking farmer's daughter, who is accompanied by her father, now discovers that her purse has been stolen, containing two sovereigns and some silver. The farmer is very wroth, saying he knew something would happen, and he told her before she left home not to come to races with money in her pocket, for "such spots are always snewing with thieves." The daughter now recollects that when the twopenny stand fell a man who had been speaking of Pretty Boy pushed against her; but he was a decent-looking fellow—it could n't be him! Get off the stand, and look about you. There are two county police with a man in custody. What has he been doing? What all his fraternity practise at such gatherings—picking pockets. Look at the girls running after the fellow, wishing to God it may be a "summary," and not a sessions. The Irishman's stand is being repaired again. He says there was no one hurt, they were only "shuk;" and what could they expect for the price? Cross the course again. There is a man dressed in Chinese costume, who has a number of ragged boys around him, beginning to form a ring. But see how the people are running this way. "What's to do?" "Oh, only some one going to quod." No, not this time. Go closer—look! On a nutbarrow, borrowed for the purpose, is laid a strong, muscular man; his face is ghastly, his hands clenched, his head cut and bleeding. This man, Thomas M'Donald, a sawyer,

had attempted to cross the course, thinking all the horses had passed; but Tom Thumb, which was far behind the lot, knocked the man down, and caught him on the head with its hind feet. He is in a state of insensibility, and two police-officers are taking him away to the hospital to die. His family will remember the Aintree meeting.

It is time to think of leaving the ground. What pleasure can there be, what healthy exercise or recreation, in a place like this? What are those carriages filled with ladies, surrounded by gentlemen who laugh, and drink, and puff away all care? These are the usual concomitants of a "Meeting." Here are several coaches filled with harlots. The drivers are in most cases trimmed out in some sort of lacc. The horses' heads have large blue or pink rosettes, and the harness is bright and glossy. Here is a young fellow at one of the coaches, engaged in emptying a hamper of edibles, and the rosy-cheeked man with crape on his hat is looking after the champagne. "—— the corkscrew," says he, and breaks the neck of the bottle on the coach wheel, pours the sparkling liquor into a gill glass, and hands it to a girl in lavender coloured satin, from whose head a plume of yellow feathers is waving, and who sits perched on the box exhibiting herself to the crowd. Pass on; at every coach you see well-dressed men dancing attendance on these women, and at that where the very stout woman is eating oranges and throwing the peel at the turfites around, there are several men in earnest conversation. Cards have been distributed amongst the fashionable and sporting gentlemen during the morning, and in imitation of the cards of the horses these ladies' cards have written on them the colours in which their owners will appear, and are in this style—"Matilda, primrose and pale blue;" "Fanny, pink and French white;" "Sarah, white and green;" "Jemima, pink and blue," &c., &c., the colours corresponding with the bonnets and dresses. The great event being over, lazy-looking and fashionably attired men cross the course and enter the ploughed gallop, drawing from their pockets the cards they have received, in order that they may the more easily distinguish their favourites. The girls, flushed with wine, waited on by bullies and pimps, watched keenly by their keepers, who are hovering about, are thus decorated to captivate the turfites. Some of them are very young, and, notwithstanding their gay attire, look ill at ease. Anxiety and remorse have already stamped in indelible characters their youthful visages; and although the Melton pies are good, the fowls particularly fine, and the wine has flowed very freely, still they are not hearty. There is no joy there, nor can there be where innocence has fled and the consciousness of guilt is not altogether stifled. But leave them; enough has been seen to convince right-minded persons

of the disgraceful exhibitions and practices which characterise "an excellent Meeting."

Before you leave the course, stroll down once more between and around the tents. The company has received large additions since the races began, and even now that they are nearly over people are still flocking on to the ground. Carts have brought loads of the lowest grade of prostitutes, and females of the humbler classes are very numerous. In the booths dancing is very general, and men half and wholly drunk stagger about in all directions. Women, with children in their arms or at the breast, in company with their husbands or friends, are eating and drinking, and seem to enjoy themselves in such fashion. The pugilists are now all far gone in drink, and their addresses to the crowd become more vulgar and disgusting than ever. The conjuror engaged by the proprietor of the camera is drunk, and persists in telling the people that he is a "practical mechanic," and has not sold himself to the devil, as many suppose. A young man is being led out of the Irish tent with his face dreadfully cut, and a bandage round his head, whilst several women accompany him, swearing vengeance on somebody "before the week's out." Two carpenter apprentices have quarrelled over their drink, and are now crossing the field determined to "fight it out." Policemen are not about here; they find quite enough to do in keeping the respectable people within bounds, for drink is now telling heavily on all. Omnibuses and cars are beginning to move off. Away, then, to the railway station, and leave the revellers to enjoy as they usually do the Aintree Carnival.

In the railway carriage is a young man who says to a companion, "My governor will expect I am at Wigan collecting accounts, and I must work hard to-morrow to pull up for lost time." Here, as in too many cases, the allurements of the turf had withdrawn a young man from his business for the day; and if nothing worse were done, the vilest deception had been practised towards his employer. Whilst speaking of collectors, the last few days have brought to light circumstances which should be deeply pondered by employers as well as by the employed. A short time ago, a young man, respectably connected, came to Liverpool, and obtained a situation as collector in a large establishment. One of the places of public "amusement" which he first visited was the "Salle de Danse;" it presented attractions which he could not resist, and his visits were frequent. One day he neglected to hand over to the cashier the amount which he had collected, and in the evening he met with "a friend." They entered a public-house in a back street, and partook of brandy. He recollected nothing further until the middle of the

night, when he found himself lying on a sofa in a dark room. He arose and got into the street, but in such a confused state that he could not find afterwards the house he had left; and thus he reeled home. In the morning he found all his money had been taken — £11 of his own, and about £14 belonging to his employers. Whilst in great distress of mind consequent upon his loss, he met another "friend," a man who could "put him in for a good thing." The "turf" was shown to be the best and only means of restoring his shattered fortune, for not only could the amount lost be won, but endless sums in addition, by the purchase of a "tip," which would only cost £2. Unfortunately, the advice of this "friend" was acted on, and the young man took his employer's money to pay for "the tip," by which he expected, and was assured, to win £240. The event came off "crabs," and instead of winning anything, he lost £40. Again he had recourse to his employer's money to enable him to maintain his position and "get round;" but he had gone too far. He is now an inmate of the Borough Gaol. He has read *Liverpool Life*, and in extreme anguish of mind many times exclaimed that to his cost he knows the facts stated therein to be too true.

Many similar instances could be cited, for judges from the bench have been induced to notice the frequency of embezzlement brought about by turf practices. In Liverpool, the professional betting men have recently received "hard hits," and several of them, who rode and walked with their "heads high," have become defaulters, and are now missing. One gentleman, in addition to other losses, is reported to have "dropped" £300 on the Lime Street ward election. To such a length are men led by the gambling spirit engendered and fostered by great and successful "Meetings."

CHAPTER V.

THE concentration of intelligence and philanthropy now brought to bear upon the subject of juvenile delinquency constitutes one of the most hopeful and cheering signs of the times. The efforts of the Government on criminal legislation, the various modes of prison discipline recommended and adopted, the best concocted schemes of true-hearted and right-minded men, have all well-nigh failed to accomplish the object sought; and now the public men who frame and direct the public mind are turning the full force of their earnestness, activity, and intelligence to the reformation of juvenile offenders. The startling fact that almost 12,000 persons, between

the ages of twelve and seventeen, pass annually through the prisons of this country has aroused the most indifferent — nay, it has done more, it has suggested, directed, and caused inquiries to be instituted, the results of which will no doubt prove as beneficial to society as they will be worthy of the national character. In tracing out the sources and springs of juvenile crime, the simplest facts have a peculiar value. The object of these papers is more to supply facts than to deal in arguments — to show life as it is more than as it should be. The truthful picture is not always so pleasing to look upon as the fancy sketch, and societies, like individuals, shrink from the contemplation of their deformity so long as neither disposition nor inclination be felt to seek a remedy for the defects pointed out. Painful, and it may be revolting, as the scenes will prove that are to be depicted as bearing on the subject of juvenile delinquency, they will not be looked on with disdain by any rightly-balanced mind, but be regarded simply as what they profess to be—*facts* which may assist, in however small degree, to elucidate that most important of all social or national questions — How can juvenile depravity be checked or eradicated?

The reports of the chaplain and governor of the Liverpool Borough Gaol have been laid before the public: they reveal many things which are pleasing, more that are the reverse. From these it may be seen that juvenile delinquency prevails to an alarming extent, and excites, as well it may, the deepest interest on the part of the authorities. The Rev. Thomas Carter, who fills the deeply responsible office of chaplain to the borough prison, and who discharges the various onerous and trying duties in such a manner as to call forth from time to time the warmest approval of the bench of magistrates, has for many years paid considerable attention to the subject of juvenile crime, besides taking an active part in the establishment of institutions having for their object criminal reformation. His “journal” bears ample testimony to the caution, just discrimination, and anxious care which he bestows on the deplorably neglected and unfortunate objects of his solicitude. He has kindly permitted the publication of a few extracts condensed from that valuable record; and it is proposed to submit these in corroboration of the scenes to be depicted and statements which will be advanced, all of which go to show the terrible depth of degradation and depravity which surrounds and involves a large portion of the youth of both sexes in this town. Seeing the vast amount of active benevolence and philanthropy continually at work, many ministers, and even men of the world, are staggered and stand aghast at what has already been shown, and find it difficult to believe that such things can be. There

is satisfaction, although of a very painful kind, in the thought that all who are incredulously inclined may speedily set their doubts at rest by that most effectual mode—personal inspection of the haunts and homes where juvenile depravity is nurtured, fostered, fertilised, and matured. After a careful perusal of our description of the scenes witnessed and characters met with during the past fortnight, amidst only a small portion of this vast and rapidly increasing community, we believe that no person will be surprised to learn that crime, and more particularly juvenile crime, is fearfully on the increase.

Many intelligent and observant persons, on their first visit to Liverpool, have been struck by the great body of youths dirty, ragged, careless, and apparently uncared for, who roam about the town, more particularly in the neighbourhood of the docks and markets. They appear to have no settled means of obtaining a livelihood, but are thrown completely on their own resources for food, clothing, and, in many cases, lodging. Go to the Seacombe slip, from which the channel steamers take their departure. The hordes of boys here occupy almost the whole time of one policeman to keep them in check. If they be driven from the slip, they take refuge on the steps; driven from the steps, they get on to the stage or slip again, and are ever ready to carry—or carry off—the luggage of the easy-going or not quite wide-awake passenger or excursionist. To stand amongst a crowd of these boys for a few minutes will convince the most sceptical that the habits they are forming, the training they are daily receiving, and the temptations to which they are exposed, must eventually lead them into the criminal class. To talk of education or school tuition—teaching these children the useful arts of reading and writing, combined with the homœopathic dose of moral training usually given in the day and evening schools—as being the great panacea for juvenile depravity, displays something as lamentable as a want of common sense. Whatever amount of precept be given, example is still wanted. The Irish lesson book in the evening school is very good, but the daily lesson book of the homes and streets has greater attractions, and exerts a deeper influence on the character of these boys. Living as they do surrounded by such baneful influences, their life is educating them, as the daily life of every man is educating him, little as many heed it. There is much force in the popular saying, “Show me the company a man keeps, and I will tell you what he is.” And so in the case of these children. When their homes are seen in all their gloominess and destitution of every social or physical comfort; when the fathers are seen reeling in from the beershop and card table, inclined to ruffianism, and rendered irascible by drink and disappointment;

when the mother is looked on turning out of the gin palace with the infant at her bosom, and staggering home to begin the nightly brawl — when it is seen thus how children are suckled in sin, cradled in crime, and catechised in blasphemy, some insight will be obtained into the extensive manufactories of criminals which are kept in active operation, and are daily on the increase amongst us. From well-authenticated facts it is learned, that in the great majority of cases these youths are thus thrown on the world by the dissipation, depravity, or neglect of their parents. It is not, as many suppose, that their parents are poor or destitute, and cannot afford, even if they have the inclination, to train their offspring to some industrial occupation. It is sheer neglect, downright degradation, utterly ignoring the existence of such a thing as parental responsibility. Children neglected at the very time the will is being formed, and when the love of liberty and resistance to anything like control constitute almost a passion of the soul — left to wander where they please, form what companionships they like, indulge in those pastimes and amusements which have such a fascination for youth — is it to be wondered at that the means adopted to gratify the propensities excited by such a course of life are unscrupulous and defiant of the law? Here is a case from the chaplain's journal, where a whole family are thrust into crime through parental neglect — and how wise is the law which thus seizes on a guilty parent and makes him feel in the only way such a creature can be made to feel : —

4. H. S. — This boy had absconded from home, and had for many weeks been living on his wits — stealing where he could, and sometimes sustaining himself by garbage from about the markets. When apprehended he had been several weeks from home, and denied that he had any parents living. It was discovered, when inquiries were instituted, that he had a brother in gaol under conviction of felony, one who had been nine or ten times there, and that he had a sister likewise who had been several times in custody. His father was in receipt of constant wages sufficient to maintain his family, but he had sadly neglected his parental duties, and he is now compelled to pay 2s. 6d. weekly towards the maintenance of this child in a reformatory.

Or, take another instance, which still more strongly illustrates the position advanced, and notice, also, the worthy chaplain's remark : —

26. R. D., 14 years of age. This boy's father is a mechanic at a manufactory in this town, receiving constant wages. He is a drunken fellow; has been in gaol for violent assaults on his wife, who is a disreputable woman, having more than once left her husband and family to cohabit with another man. The boy had been very much neglected, and suffered to take his own course, which could not be otherwise than one of sin and crime.

But there are amongst this neglected class some boys who manfully struggle and nobly fight "the battle of life." At the police-court, before Mr. Mansfield, a short time since, two boys were charged with

breaking into a large food manufactory in this town, and stealing therefrom. The principal evidence against them was a boy—capless, his hair cut very short, having only a blue flannel shirt and trousers, well worn, to cover him, with a well-formed head, a full clear eye, and a noble and manly bearing. He gave his evidence with a distinctness and a display of intelligence at once remarkable. We lost no time in learning his history. He was a native of Manchester. His mother was a widow, who found it difficult to support a large family; and this boy, being of a daring and adventurous character, had left home, come to Liverpool, obtained a ship, and had made a voyage to sea. He was paid off at the Sailors' Home, and was soon shipped again from there; but a dispute arose about the wages he was to receive, he thinking, from his experience, that he was worth more than what was offered, and therefore he refused to go to sea on the terms, consequently lost his discharge note, and would not be tolerated at the Sailors' Home. He strove hard to get a ship, and his money was exhausted. He earned a few pence as he could by carrying anything, holding horses, &c.; and when he could pay, he lived, or rather slept, at a two-penny lodging-house. At other times he was compelled to "sleep out," as he called it. The flags of the bakery at the corner of Canning-place furnished him, as they daily and nightly continue to furnish many, with a warm resting-place; but if the weather was wet, he took refuge near the Sailors' Home, in a yard which is about to be converted into a magnificent bazaar. A quantity of empty barrels in this place supplied shelter to a great number of outcasts; and here this noble little fellow had to listen to the jingling of skeleton keys, to hear robberies planned, to witness the boys return and enjoy themselves over the proceeds of their midnight depredations, but still, so far as could be ascertained through the instrumentality of the police, maintained his integrity. In his tattered and wretched condition he presented himself one morning before the leading partner of the firm who had been robbed, and stated what he knew of the plunder and the plunderers. He agreed to accompany any one that night and discover the robbers; this was agreed on, and the boys were taken in the act of entering the premises by means of skeleton keys. Mr. Mansfield noticed the boy in court, and, as he has done in many cases before, so in this: after instituting every inquiry calculated to corroborate or disprove the boy's story, he felt convinced the lad ought to be assisted, and extricated from his perilous position. Through the instrumentality of the worthy magistrate, a ship was obtained, the boy was fitted out, and he is now with his vessel off the coast of Newfoundland. His gratitude to

Mr. Mansfield was abundantly expressed, and we hope that gentleman will receive the only reward he ever seeks for such kind offices—a knowledge that the boy has become, in disposition and character, a genuine specimen of a true British sailor.

It is sad to contemplate the case of parents permitting their children to fall into crime: how much more sad is it to see parents compelling their children to adopt a vicious and criminal course, in order that the offspring's sinfulness may minister to the degraded parents' inextinguishable desires! The police-courts have again and again brought this before the public, and in connection, too, with the crime about to be noticed. But amongst all the descriptions met with, amongst all the cases investigated, never was anything more harrowing, exciting, pitiful, heartrending, than this case from Mr. Carter's journal. The picture presented by the simple statement of facts ought to be ever before the mind of all who are aiming at the reformation of juvenile offenders.

218. D. A., 12 years of age, a poor neglected child, twice in gaol for stealing cotton. When last committed was covered with vermin, and bruised from head to foot, the evident marks of abuse, which she declared she had received from her father, "because she did not bring home enough of cotton."

How many poor little creatures who crouch in doorways and huddle together on warehouse steps watching cotton carts, receiving ever and anon the visitation from the carter's whip when they are detected "picking up the bits," could relate the story of a life revealing facts as painful as this! And yet the parents of these children revel on, and are heeded not; their children become criminals, and the only regret experienced by such inhuman beings is, that less cotton will be brought home, consequently they will have less money to riot on. To thoughtful men, given up to the study of social problems, such facts are pregnant with instruction. To ministers of religion such facts may act "as a lantern in a dark place," and lead them to consider whether any effort has yet been made to spread light commensurate with this darkness.

One of the cases recorded in the chaplain's journal presented some peculiar features bearing on the social state of the poorer classes. In order to ascertain the truth of the statements made by a juvenile offender, we resolved to visit the locality in which the boy had resided. Boys destitute of parents, or driven from home by the conduct of step-parents, generally take refuge in lodging-houses, where they meet with companions who initiate and train them in every species of roguery. Mr. Lloyd Baker, the originator and manager of the Hardwicke Reformatory, in Gloucestershire, says—"It is well known to all who have studied the subject, that

boys almost always learn crime from other boys. I do not mean to deny the existence of a 'Fagan,' but I mean that such are extremely rare, if not altogether extinct, in any but extremely large towns. All the boys in this county who have had any education in crime have learned it from boys under sixteen." And Mr. Carter's journal contains many cases in which the low lodging-houses are cited as the training-school for juvenile criminals. Here is a sample :—

J. B., with many *aliases*. This boy is an orphan, and has been eight times in prison. He has three brothers: the eldest is transported, the two youngest are supposed to be in the Industrial School. The step-father is living, but not in this town. The mother was a drunkard, and neglected her family more after the father's death. This boy lived at a notorious juvenile thieves' lodging-house in Preston-street, kept by ———.

Here is another case :—

202. G. J., 14. This boy is an orphan. He was connected with a gang of young thieves, three of whom are now in gaol, committed for trial for a house robbery. When he was before the magistrates on a charge of breaking into a house, the accomplices referred to, who had been concerned in the robbery with which he was charged, availed themselves of the opportunity of the lad's aunt's absence from home, attending the Police-court on her nephew's behalf, to rob her house.

Seeing thus the predominating and baneful influence such houses have on those who frequent them, either from choice or necessity; the incentive they are to crime, and the stimulus they supply for the further practice of iniquity; the allurements they hold out to waverers; the goads they apply to the hesitating and not yet thoroughly abandoned; and the fuel they supply to the feebly kindled fire of criminal passion and gratification, it becomes important, as bearing on the subject under consideration, that the public should see clearly what these houses are, and who are their keepers and inmates.

CHAPTER VI.

A VISIT to a thieves' lodging-house; a ramble amongst robbers' dens—the scenes and associations to be met with in the most degraded localities of Liverpool! What interest can the good, quiet, easy-going, well-to-do portion of society, designated the general public, feel in these disgusting details? The town is progressing, say they; the commercial enterprise of our merchants has obtained for them a world-wide renown; our docks are monuments of our wealth and greatness; our public buildings, our benevolent institutions, our religious edifices, our public schools—all attest the spirit which actuates the money-making community. Where is there a town that has done, or is doing, more to benefit the sick, the poor,

the maimed, the blind? Why show us these heart-sickening and discouraging scenes, when we are doing all in our power to alleviate and mitigate human suffering and woe? Stay, good friends; there is no quarrel with what you are doing or have done. Noble deeds, substantially recorded in noble buildings, testify to the truth of what you say. Yet you feel warmly for the honour of your town, and will necessarily desire to know the people who surround you. Carry with you, then, all your benevolent feelings, all your love and patriotism, all your pleasing views of life, with its objects, enjoyments, gratifications—all your love of children, of home, and everything so tenderly wrapped up and expressed in that charming and soothing name—bring all with you, and accompany us through a few old streets, a few old houses, where you will meet with a few old inhabitants of this good old town. You are going amongst the dangerous classes; but as you mean no ill, fear none.

As you pass along the street, which many years ago formed the course of the old pool from which the town in part derives its name, there are on each side of you old, densely populated streets, which have become notorious as the abode of thieves and abandoned and profligate characters of both sexes. At the corner of every street but one stands a gin palace, and the groups around clearly indicate the class of life to which they belong. Turn out of the leading thoroughfare, and enter one of the cross streets. The darkness in which you become enshrouded is painfully experienced. The people who dwell here dread the light, and it would appear that the authorities encourage the feeling by permitting the gloom. The night is murky; the rays reflected from the well-lighted spirit vaults at the corner shoot across the street and reveal—window shutters begrimed with filth, broken panes in bedroom windows, which are in some cases stuffed with rags—a barber's shop with the barber at the door looking out for customers of all sorts, for he is not particular in confining himself to hair-cutting and shaving, as his sign would lead you to suppose—the entrance to a court, around which are congregated girls and boys of all ages, near which and over the door of a house is the word "lodgings." Women in very loose and careless attire stand at doorways, and you dimly see the figures of men slouching about and watching your every movement.

Stand a few moments—your eyes will become more accustomed to the gloom: then notice the houses. A long row, on each side of the street, of filthy-looking, rickety, ramshackle tenements, monotonous in the misery they indicate. The light from the small huxters' shops here and there is taken advantage of by boys to play pitch and toss, and noisy altercations are going on amongst those

youthful and active gamblers. As you make your way up the street, the doors of several houses are open. In some a small candle casts a flickering ray on the wretched household, and miserable-looking women are seen lying on rudely constructed sofas, their heads wrapped up, and bundles of rags thrown over their bodies : they are trying to sleep off the effect and fumes of a recent debauch. In many houses the light from the fire is all that is sought or required, and here moving figures are dimly seen, but the greatest stillness reigns. The cellars are inhabited ; how this accords with the regulation of the Health Committee it is hard to imagine. In many, vegetables of all sorts are offered for sale : in all, swarms of men, women, and children are found crouching round the grate, or thrusting themselves now and then through the half-opened door, in order to observe who is about, whilst at the same time they obtain purer air. Whom can we ask for the thieves' lodging-house ? The men look threatening ; the women are surly, and knit their brows, which are clearly symptoms of coarse replies. But here, at the entrance of a court, on the door step, sits a poor creature. She is thinly clad, and rolls her apron round her arms, which are resting on her knees. She is gazing despairingly at the filthy pavement, but rises when addressed, and with great courtesy directs us to the house, walking down the street until within a few yards of the den. Does she happen to know the boy whose friends and relatives resided in this street ? " Oh yes, I knew him very well, and a nice little fellow he was. I remember him when a child on his mother's knee, and he was such a pretty boy ; but, God help him, when his mother died and his stepfather turned him out, and he had nowhere to go but such houses as these, what could anybody expect ? There was nothing but priggings for him ; but the old woman that he lodged with will tell you all about him. There, that 's the house, next to that as has the light in." With a heavy sigh, the poor sin-worn creature turns away. We cross the street and enter the thieves' lodging-house.

The house is filthy, and almost destitute of furniture. With the exception of a few rickety stools and an old table, together with some little rude ornaments on the mantelshelf, there is nothing removable, unless it be the plaster on the walls, and some of that is gone. The grate is small—the fire smaller ; and the ashes are heaped up at the bottom of the grate. The old woman is not in ; but the persons present, who have been huddled round the fire, and rise on being addressed, exhibit a sad picture of neglect and degradation. At the mention of the boy's name about whom we inquire, the greatest sympathy and interest are excited, but the faces and

features now looked upon are marked strongly by the constant practice of vice and immorality. Here is a girl, about fifteen years of age, with blear eyes, overhanging eyebrows, and of most repulsive features ; her covering is of the slightest description, and the foulness of her person is painful to look upon. By her stands a boy, who is indebted for his keen looks, cunning leers, and sharp replies, to the education of the streets. He exchanges significant glances with a man who is lounging lazily before the fire, supporting one knee with both his hands, but who has not the courage or honesty to look up. A question put causes him to turn round and display a face on which villany is plainly stamped. Oh, the horrid look of this fellow ! What a companion for those around him ! The inevitable result of such companionship is thus shown in the chaplain's journal :—

12. B. J., ten years of age, a very precocious lad. Was found to be connected with two adult professional thieves, who were in the habit of employing him in their robberies. On this occasion he had been introduced by them into a shop window, and was found concealed in the shop about midnight. He had frequently absconded—decoyed, no doubt, from home—and his parents had no control over him whatever.

A few disjointed sentences grunted forth by the man causes a dirty decrepid girl to rise and offer some explanation. She is hunch-backed ; her face is distorted, and frightfully attenuated. She knew the boy very well, was sorry for him. His stepfather drove him to the streets. Would be glad to see the little fellow once more ; he would never have gone far wrong if his mother had lived—and much more to the same effect. The principal speaker of this group is a girl, cleaner and better looking than any that surround her, and who displays great intelligence, considering her position in life. The man evidently does not like the visitor, and we are ushered into a house close by, another lodging-house of the same class. The proprietor is an elderly woman, stout and rosy-faced. She sits by the fire with the bellows on her knee, and opposite her is a woman whose head appears to have enlarged, and her face to have expanded in proportion as her body has shrunk. She has on a “very skrimpy” blue dress, with short sleeves, which display her withered and wrinkled arms, around which she strives to twist a check apron. There is a deal form placed along the side of a folding table. We are asked to sit, and comply. The walls are covered with rude ornaments ; there is a shelf filled with crockery ; the place and proprietor betoken plenty to eat and drink, however the means are procured to obtain it. The door of the back kitchen is open, and footsteps are heard. Presently a young woman comes forward, drawing over her person as she walks a light printed wrapper, such as are seen at shop doors in the vicinity of Bold-street, marked “3s. 11½d.,” the

"11½d." very small, and in black lead. She exhibits no feeling of shame at her want of decency, but adjusts her dress, sits down, and with shy looks relates what she wishes us to believe is a pitiful story of the difficulties she had met with in her endeavour to obtain a situation, not a word of which can be believed. The boy whose relatives we seek was not much at this house, but there is a very nice lad sleeps here who is anxious to obtain some regular employment. Perhaps he is in now. The woman calls, and after a little time, the boy comes from the back kitchen. He is a well-formed lad, meets you with a steady gaze, but his clothes and person display poverty and neglect. In this dismal-looking and damp place are noticed several lads lying about the hearth. They pay a small sum per night for shelter, and the floor forms their resting-place when they have not money to pay for a bed. What a phase of life is this ! What a pitiful history is comprised in the narrative of the boy now before us ! He is nearly fourteen ; his father is dead, his mother in the Rainhill Asylum ; he gets his living by carrying baskets, or "anything as is honest," can read and write, was brought up at St. Andrew's School, would be very glad to get out of his present course of life. And the lodging-house keeper says there are hundreds of boys in the same position. They have no friends, and if they steal and are detected and committed, as was said by one of this class, "the Borough finishes them, for they are never considered worth anything until they have passed through there." Looking at the facts before us, we are not surprised to find in the chaplain's journal such cases as these :—

44. C. I., 14 years of age. This boy's father died seven years ago. Had two brothers, and all three were regularly sent out about the docks "to get their own living." One is now on board a man-of-war ; another stowed away in a merchant vessel, and is now at sea ; and this boy has been four times in gaol. He has one sister, who was discharged from custody a few days ago, and is living a criminal life ; and his mother is under sentence of four years' penal servitude.

242. F. I., 14 years of age. Been nine times in gaol. Mother died when he was in gaol on one occasion. Father, who is in constant work at 35s. per week, has since had two or three disreputable women living with him in succession as his housekeepers. He drinks hard.

258. L. E., 12 years of age. This boy is an orphan, but resides when at home at all with an uncle, whose son is in the criminal class. Though so young, he has thrice been in the hands of the police. Is connected with a gang of five young thieves, now nearly broken up, inasmuch as all, with one exception, now in gaol, have been sent or are going to different reformatories. The exception alluded to is this little fellow's "pal."

74. S. J., 12 years of age, an orphan. Been four times in gaol. Father used to drink hard, and died suddenly, leaving the boy under the care of an abandoned step-mother, whose cruel conduct towards the boy first drove him from home. She is now a pauper, and in the workhouse.

We are recommended to make further inquiries "up the street," and go accordingly. At almost every door, on every flight of steps, are crowds of men, women, boys, and girls. Here is a cellar: the door is divided; the upper portion is open, and the noise within attracts all passers. It is a penny ale cellar. "Come inside, they are only chaffing a bit." A very stout woman leans over the door, as if to prevent intrusion. Men are swearing, women are pulling each other about. "What are you staring at? Come inside." The place is about four yards square; the coloured walls and tables are tolerably clean, but the company are very riotous. Two long tables are in the place; the seats are attached to the wall. The beer is brought from the back cellar in quart jugs. The drunkenness exhibited here is of a peculiar character; it is more lively than lethargic. There is a frightful wildness imparted to the eye, and an intense ferocity to the features. The people here have representatives in gaol. This street altogether is very fully represented.

59. A. H. J., 14 years of age. This boy has a step-father, who is in constant work at 22s. per week. When his residence was visited after the boy's apprehension, the mother was found in a beastly state of intoxication, with an infant by her side, and three other young children almost entirely naked. The house was in a disgusting state of filth. The boy has been three times convicted.

The language used by the men and women with whom the cellar is crammed must be passed over; indeed, the whole scene—with the assemblage of vile persons at the door, boys with sunken eyes, thick lips, closely cropped hair, and determined aspect, with young girls and children, who seem in nowise disturbed or excited by the quarrelling within—is such as may excite magistrates and all in authority to read with deep attention the recent address of Baron Alderson as to the condition and prospect of the criminal class.

We learn on inquiry that the persons whom we seek have removed to a street of similar character to this, but in another district of the town. More gin shops, more drunken groups are passed, and on turning to enter the street a girl is seen in earnest conversation with a policeman: she has a shawl drawn over her head and shoulders, which conceals her features, but she is narrowly watched by two women, who are peeping from the side of a door, where their persons are concealed. What revenge and villany flash from their eyes! Close by are a number of urchins wrestling and rolling each other over on the pavement under the light of the gin-shop lamp. Here are two women leading a man home: he is helplessly drunk, and they are voluble, and use infamous language to the children they pass by. Women with distorted features are engaged persuading stunted and ill-looking men not to be shabby, but "pay for a gill or two." "Where does —— live? He keeps a lodging-

house." "Ask there," is the reply, pointing to a jerryshop. The jerryshop is thronged with customers. Before the bar are four or five bricklayers and other labourers, who are far gone in drink. Behind the bar is a slovenly woman, and at her feet a bed. The back part of her vaults is filled with men of the vilest description, who peer out and look on the inquirer as if to see if he is worth "muffling." This house and street are also represented in prison.

16. J. A. This boy was connected with a gang of pickpockets who were in the habit of assembling at his father's house, where they were harboured. The gang has been partly dispersed by the removal of three of them to reformatories. This boy has a sister, who has been convicted, and is now living a criminal course.

W. A., 15 years of age. The father of this girl is a moulder, and in receipt of 32s. a-week wages. Has been three times in gaol; the mother has been four times there—once for a violent assault upon her husband. Both parents drink, and lodge at a beerhouse.

An old man, a shoemaker, comes forward. He knows the place. "Do you see that lamp? it 's just above there." What dismal houses are here. Nearly all the doors are open, ready to pull any one in—and the police court shows how often this is done. Courts are passed. How foul and foetid is the atmosphere; yet is it in harmony with the lives of the inhabitants. Here is an opening or passage, and two carts in it: figures are seen emerging from the place—how they slink past! Wherever inquiries are made the door is held ajar, and suspicious looks are encountered. Here are whisky cellars, at which little business will be done so long as the gin palace and beershop are open—then the riot will commence. In that yard, up to a recent period, was a swinging boat, and the female depravity displayed there, and which may be witnessed any day, now surpassed anything that can be described or has ever been recorded. There are lights in very few of the houses, but on going to the doors we are met by a growl from some beings that we cannot see. The house is found at last. The proprietor at first denies himself, but gradually becomes reconciled to admit his own identity. He is a stout, elderly man, with coarse features and a swaggering air. The dishonesty of his relatives and the purity of his own character are what he likes to speak of. There is no furniture in the house that we can see, yet he boasts of his possessions. At the fire is a young woman with an infant at her breast; opposite her is a powerful man, dirty and unshaven. He is destitute alike of coat and shoes, and is warming his feet by the fire. When the proprietor of the house is speaking of his honesty and well-known integrity, which had never been impugned, the shoeless fellow applies his fingers to his nose, and looks significantly at the woman. We obtained the information we required, and found that it corroborated in

the fullest manner statements made to the chaplain by prisoners, and revealed facts to which we shall have occasion to call attention. To take children from such homes as have been noticed, and give them an industrial training, combined with moral and secular instruction, is the object of juvenile reformatories. May the friends and supporters of all such take courage, and not be downcast with the magnitude of the work before them, is our earnest desire.

As we leave the street in its utter darkness, moral, social, and physical, the sounds of voices fall upon the ear, and a group of persons assembled at the corner, close by the little shoe-shop, demands a few moments. Here are three blind men, singing the simple melody of "Lily Dale." It is very pleasing to observe the effect which music, even of such a simple character, has on the minds of the most depraved. In the crowd are many men, stalwart fellows, unshaven and ferocious-looking, with Jim Crow hats, and smoking short pipes. Women come out of the houses close by, carrying infants nearly naked, which they dandle in the night air to the melody of the singers. Girls gather closely around, and, although poor and penniless in appearance, are so far touched with sympathy and compassion as to give copper to the poor blind.

I go (she said) to the land of rest;

And ere my strength shall fail,

I must tell you where, near my own loved home,

You must lay poor Lily Dale.

'Neath the chesnut-tree, where the wild flowers grow;

And the stream ripples forth through the vale,

Where the birds shall warble their songs in spring—

There lay poor Lily Dale.

The upturned, sightless orbs of the singers; the peculiarly painful and pitiful expression of face which the blind generally exhibit; the interest excited and manifested amongst the spectators—these, contrasted with the scenes we had just witnessed, suggested cheering thoughts, bright hopes, and not altogether unpleasant recollections of the evening's ramble.

CHAPTER VII.

It was deemed prudent to suspend the consideration of that deeply important subject, the sources of juvenile delinquency, during the festive season of Christmas and the inauguration of the new year. The one having passed, the other being now entered upon, it may reasonably be supposed that the public mind will become somewhat

settled, to pursue with renewed vigour the serious business of life. Without further preface, therefore, attention is earnestly invited to those matters in which all are more or less interested, affecting, as they do, the social and moral condition of a large class of this great community.

The destruction of the Gambling Tables, and the dispersion of the gamblers who were accustomed day and night to assemble in the yard at the corner of Lime-street, are matters for hearty congratulation by all who are striving to purify the moral atmosphere that surrounds the haunts and homes of "the dangerous classes." By whatever agency this has been brought about, the result cannot but prove highly beneficial to the town, and reflects the highest credit on the police who effected the capture. As early as June last, the attention of those in authority was directed to the existence of such a fruitful source of depravity, such a fearful school of vice, as might there be seen in active operation, in the very heart of the town. Seeing that the authorities have at last begun to discharge their duties—and that, too, it may be inferred from the judicious remarks of Mr. Mansfield, in real earnest—it is much to be desired they will continue in this righteous course. Let them not rest satisfied with the destruction of tables in the streets, but go into the shops and houses where such things are known to exist. If a lottery or a raffle for a Christmas dinner can be stopped, why should wheels of fortune, mock auctions, and more questionable modes of gambling be suffered to exercise such a pernicious influence on the people? What is the difference between working men raffling at a beer-shop and religious professors raffling at a bazaar? Has modern civilisation reached that point when, in reference to the respectable (?) raffle, it will be said the end justifies the means? Justice in England is, or ought to be, even-handed: the poor can never be punished for their poverty; neither ought the more affluent to escape by reason of their superior intelligence. If either are vicious, or indulge in vicious pursuits, let the penalty be in each case duly inflicted. The necessity of one law for the rich and another for the poor will, after all, be no fiction, if the raffle at the beer-shop be wrong and the raffle at the bazaar be right. Let us notice gambling of both sorts, secular and religious.

We visited a gambling stall or shop near the Sailors' Home. A wheel of fortune or lottery occupied one side of the den, a gambling table the other. The place was thronged with youths of both sexes. Of sailor boys there were a great number, of young prostitutes not a few. For the risk of a penny the chance of a valuable prize was offered, and the proprietor urged all to come forward, and many did.

Although many pence were paid, no prize was drawn of the value of one penny whilst we remained. Here was the first step in the gambler's career, and the stall was doing a thriving business. A good-looking sailor boy was at the entrance, denouncing the place and proprietor in most emphatic terms: he declared that at the stall on one evening he was induced to play until he had lost 19s. He knew it now to be a decided swindle, and had the good sense never to try and win his money back; but how few are like him! These traps for simple-hearted seamen abound in this locality; why should they not share the same fate as the gambling stalls in Lime-street?

We visited a bazaar held for the benefit of a church. The room was tastefully decorated, festooned with flowers, and scriptural mottoes were curiously worked in with evergreens. Stalls were presided over by elegantly-dressed ladies, whose anxiety to secure purchasers and effect sales none could doubt. The room was thronged with visitors of a highly intelligent and respectable class. Mothers brought their sons, fathers brought their daughters—all had money to spend: this was the proper mode of spending it. Young ladies of pleasing manners and winning address perambulated the room with *lottery bags*. Most of them addressed every gentleman they passed, although they had never seen the individuals before, have not since, may never do so again. The object of this was to secure customers for their raffle or lottery. As a particular request, or a personal favour, you were asked to invest sixpence or a shilling, for which trifling sum the chances were that "a set of dinner-mats" or "a beautifully-dressed doll" would be secured. It was in vain that gentlemen urged their destitute state of bachelorhood, and that neither dinner-mats nor dolls would be of any service to them. Every objection was met by these ladies, and the gentlemen were quickly informed that if they were not married they ought to be. All the arts for which the gentler sex are so remarkable were put into requisition, in order that a shilling, sixpence, or even a penny might be obtained, and one more name added to the list of gamblers. These ladies gave no change. If the amount you sought to invest was one shilling, and you were simple enough to entrust half-a-crown to the fair fingers, you were done—decidedly done! In one case it was said the list was just filled up, and the raffle would take place immediately; but when the fair holder of the lottery bag was interrogated more closely, the admission was reluctantly made that she had obtained only *three* names, and her list required twenty, at three shillings each! Young girls—children—were here engaged in this very questionable employment, and they induced other children "to

put into the lottery for such a sweet little workbasket." Here we see the sanctity of religion taken to cloak or cover up the most dangerous practices—and by such means are many well-intentioned persons misled. Here are ladies making gambling-stall keepers of themselves, and the daughters of most respectable men spending their time in touting or canvassing for customers. And all this done for what? To benefit a church! Where are the ministers? Do they approve of such conduct and practices, and call it "a labour of love?" Has religion come to this, and must the temple be again cleansed of the "money changers" and those that sell doves? Let the authorities look to it, and inquire why should these lotteries and stalls not share the same fate as the gambling-stalls in Lime-street.

The holding of a bazaar, where "useful, fancy, and ornamental articles" are sold for the benefit of a church or schools, may be admissible; but the holding of lotteries or gambling-stalls at such bazaars is highly objectionable. They are, looked at in a moral point of view, utterly indefensible; and although ministers of the gospel are found availing themselves of such "helps," none have yet had the hardihood to defend the practice; and, looking at the precepts of that gospel these men profess to teach, their conduct in this matter is reprehensible. Well may the scoffer smile, and the cynic sneer, when they see principles, profession, and practice so antagonistic. The Egyptians are not the only race that love the "flesh-pots!"

Religious professors, by their modern practices, create another source of juvenile delinquency—that is, sending children from door to door with cards and boxes to beg for missionary purposes. Several cases can be given, showing the vicious tendency of such beggarly means to support what is believed to be truth; but we need only give one which came not long ago under our own observation. A little girl connected with a Sunday School was entrusted with a card, and instructed by her teachers how to go about collecting. She set about her work, obtained coppers here and there; but her moral training had not been sufficiently attended to, and the temptation of the sweet-shop overcame her love for the spread of truth. She appropriated some of the money collected in the purchase of "paradise," and, little by little, she became a confirmed thief, and is now in the criminal class. Up to the time of her entering on the missionary enterprise, nothing was ever seen or known of her thieving propensities; and the probability is, that had she not been exposed to the temptation, she might now have been respectable and respected. Why should children be exposed to temptation in this way, for such a purpose? and how terrible the responsibility of those teachers who

train children to habits of mendicity! Every Sabbath-day sober minded people are shocked, and Christians ought to be ashamed, to see the hawking of missionary boxes from door to door by children, whose parents, if they could but see the evil seed that is by this means sown, ought at once to remove their offspring from such temptation. Many eminent ministers regret the necessity for Sunday Schools at all, because they consider them as so many testimonies to the unchristian state of parents. And what parent who is desirous of supporting a manly, independent spirit, and who wishes his children to display the same, would permit them to be made beggars, and endanger their moral character, in order that their name might stand high on the list at the children's missionary collection? Older heads and hands entrusted with sums of money are overcome, lose their balance, and fall; and children, whose moral powers are not yet developed, but whose propensities are excessively active, can hardly be expected to stand a test which men of standing and character find it difficult sometimes to undergo. Ministers who object to the working classes taking a walk in the fields on the Sunday, and who shudder at the idea of any inroad on the day of rest, ought not to be silent on the Sabbath missionary begging-box.

Now as to licensed houses where gambling is practised. These are well known to be numerous. The police can point them out by scores. We know one house—a beer-house—where card-playing is regularly carried on, and men are induced, week after week, to lose much time, and all their wages, and bring destitution upon their families in consequence. Their children, in search of food, are driven upon the streets, meet with temptations which they cannot resist, are led into crime, and go to swell the number of juvenile delinquents. Cases have come under our observation, have been inquired into, and the source of the depravity is the *card-playing beer-house*. Magistrates may enlarge gaols, and continue to build reformatories; all these and more will be required if these infamous houses are allowed thus to deal around social and moral destruction. Under the plea of playing for a Christmas goose, we know of one man who lost seven pounds in a beer-house on a Sunday morning; and there is not a Sunday passes that pounds are not lost and spent in this filthy resort. It is said that men who are fond of such unhealthy excitement, and are so far depraved, would be sure to indulge in it whether these houses were in existence or not. But how do they become fond of excitement—what has had most to do with confirming and gratifying a vicious and depraved taste? The licensed houses. Listen to a voice from the gaol:—"I began going with some lads to a drinking-shop. These lads began playing at dominoes

and cards, and I learned, and the man who kept the house put us in a little place by ourselves, so that we could fasten the door if the police came." We have witnessed during the past few months similar scenes to those described by this convict—rooms set apart for boys and young men to play cards; and *this is knowingly permitted!*

Well known card-playing houses are situated in densely populated districts. There is one which has rendered itself notorious for the riotous conduct of which it is frequently the scene. We visited the place on a Saturday evening. The rooms are small, ill furnished, and filthy. The proprietor was "drunk at the back," but his wife was attending to the customers, who appeared to be working men, not of the lowest grade. The "missus," as they called her, had a drunken look, and wore a very gaudy cap. She addressed many of the men as they came in, and referred to a slate to see what they owed. "Seven and sixpence," "six and tenpence," and in one case fourteen shillings were paid, and when the man felt inclined to dispute the amount the slatekeeper replied, "You got most of it on that night you played for the clock, for you would have me to get you some whisky." The "shots" being settled, the men settled down to drink and smoke, and after a short time went into the cellar. This was the carding room until it got later on; then all rooms were alike. There was a man here whom we had noticed from boyhood. He had a few hours before received twenty-eight shillings for his wages, had been home to clean himself, and from his wife, who was crying at the door, we learned that he had given her *twelve shillings*, to keep himself, wife, and two children for the week.

"He entered a licensed beerhouse next—
A reeking and filth-filled room,
Where, 'mid oaths and lust and lies, he must
Have felt himself quite at home;"

and when he had paid his shot and spent the evening here the whole of his wages would be gone. This fellow must have a good beef-steak on a Sunday morning to his breakfast, and would beat his wife if she was unable to procure him a substantial dinner daily. His children lived in terror of the father, and the eldest boy was frequently driven to the streets. Were it possible to investigate the circumstances of each of the twenty-eight men we saw enter this house, there is no doubt the result would be similar. Homes neglected, wives abused, children driven to crime, through the accursed vice promoted and encouraged by these licensed houses. Do we require an increase of magistrates, or do we not rather require that those we have should do their duty?

If the magistrates be anxious to do what in their power lies to check the growth of juvenile delinquency, and at the same time purify the pastimes provided for the people, let them turn their attention to other licensed establishments. At one of these, which occupies a prominent position in the town, may nightly be witnessed a scene that for grossness, immorality, or obscenity stands almost unparalleled. Even what are called the decorations of the room pander to the worst passions of humanity, and vulgarity and lasciviousness are unblushingly proclaimed. Here are youths—many from the upper classes of society, mixed up with others in more humble positions. Smoking cigars, sipping ale, wine, or brandy, chatting with degraded girls, and examining “the points” of the living tableaux constitute some of the features of the evening’s entertainment, and those which would appear to excite most attention. There is singing, and much of that class which cannot be described. Between forty and fifty boys (they could be called nothing else) were the other evening in this place, and seemed delighted to hear a filthy song called “the lively flea.” Now, the obscenity in this consisted more in the action and grimace of the vocalist than in the expressions used, although the latter were bad enough; but a more abominable song, as this was here given, one containing viler suggestions, could not be conceived. The girls laughed, the lads roared with delight, and one of them said “*he would do anything rather than miss such a treat.*” Are fathers surprised at their sons falling into a vicious course of life? Are merchants or tradesmen astonished that their confidence should be abused by such “nice young men?” How can it be otherwise, when those who have the power to check the evil would appear to lack the will? The proprietors of such resorts look at them in a business point of view, and supply what they think will pay. But the great moral responsibility rests upon the heads of those who year after year license the iniquity.

And to go further and deeper into these dark and morally death-dealing practices, where, in any town making pretensions to progress, and professions of respect for morals or manners, could be met with such a licensed promenade for prostitutes as we have seen to exist here? “Minor theatres,” “twopenny hops,” casinos, and singing saloons are all spoken of as having a tendency to promote the growth and foster the evils attendant on juvenile delinquency and public immorality. Without doubt such is the influence of these places, but all combined sink into absolute nothingness when compared with this licensed promenade for prostitutes. Here are children from twelve to sixteen years of age who are being trained, and have already learned much of the sin and trickery of the abandoned harlot. It

is in vain you look in any of our provincial towns for a festering source of moral corruption such as we see here. In London there is nothing so vile. In Paris the scene would not be permitted an hour, *if it were known*. And we are assured, by persons who have been in most of the continental cities and towns, that the iniquity here is without a parallel. Liverpool, the modern Tyre—Liverpool, that boasts of her sound Protestant feeling, of the sterling character of her evangelical clergy, of the noble resistance made against an inroad on the Sacred Day, of her benevolent and charitable institutions, of her public baths, washhouses, free public libraries, and reformatories—has, to feed an insatiable cupidity, obtained an unenviable notoriety for permitting the social life of her inhabitants to be polluted by the corrupt and filthy stream which flows from this vile spot. Not only this, the scene is watched over by the representatives of magisterial authority; and are we not, therefore, justified in saying that these practices are knowingly permitted? To whom are the rightly disposed members of the community to look for the purification of manners and morals which are thus being corrupted? Not to the proprietors, clearly: their interest consists in keeping such places open and having them filled. We have heard over and over again, that the heavy current expenses of one notorious establishment are entirely defrayed by the money paid for admission by the troops of unfortunates who nightly throng the place. It is to be hoped that the proprietors have neither wives nor daughters to maintain out of such ill-gotten gains. It is the magistrates, who grant the privileges to individuals, who are in a great measure to blame, and it is to the magistrates the public should look. The public scandal, social degradation, and misery inflicted on individuals by the existence of this promenade for prostitutes ought to make magistrates shudder for the consequences.

Again, look at the abominable and disgusting practices at the Salle de Danse, or the degrading pastimes at the Supper Rooms. We have heard a magistrate from the bench describe the scenes nightly enacted in the street as a scandal and disgrace to the town; but what would he have said were he to behold the “chamber of horrors” within, and breathe for a few hours—for a night—the pestilential atmosphere of the place? And yet, well as these places and practices are now known, we scarcely find one minister of religion in the town who has the moral courage to stand forth and declare his open hostility to such soul-destroying vanities. We hear now and then the theatre abused and spoken of very improperly; but such abuse betrays a want of knowledge. The theatre may be the medium of conveying sound instruction in that form which to the

national mind is popular ; but the theatre and the promenade, the theatre and the dancing saloon, the theatre and the supper rooms, need not of necessity be connected. A visit to the one for purposes of recreation ought not to involve the loss of moral character and self-respect ; yet in many instances which could be given such has proved the result.

There is no more pitiful spectacle than to behold a minister of religion rising at a public meeting and telling, in serious tones, how he "mourns over the iniquity of the age." It is this crying, and doing nothing else—this mourning and not working, on the part of ministers, which allows the evil to spread. He who "went about doing good" mourned over Jerusalem, but the latter was the result of the former. The scenes we have witnessed and described during the last six months should have been visited, described, and denounced by ministers. It is clearly their work. Their sacred calling invests them with peculiar power. Their education and training ought to nerve them for the duty ; and their zeal for moral purity, if nothing more, should render apathy abhorrent. But no ; controversial lectures, speeches at public meetings, and "mourning" at tea parties, occupy the portion of the time which ought to be directed to the pleasures, practices, and pastimes of the people, unless "the pastor of the people" and "the shepherd of the flock" are to become the poetic fictions of a by-gone age.

CHAPTER VIII.

FOR several weeks past the attention of our readers has been directed to the sources of juvenile delinquency. It has been seen, in the amusements provided for the people, what effective lessons in vice are daily and nightly being given *under the sanction of licences*. It must also have been noted what a number of pupils attend these schools of vice, what apt scholars they are, what proficiency they make, and what influence they exert on the social and moral life of the town. If the object of our law and government be to check the flood of iniquity, which threatens to overwhelm, or at least seriously retard, our social progress, we might suppose those entrusted with the administration of the law would naturally seek to discover and dry up the source from which the evil springs. But no attempts at all commensurate with the magnitude of the evil are made in this direction. We prepare the ground, allow the evil seed to be sown, permit the existence of fostering influences, watch it

spring up, allow it to propagate itself, and when it has obtained a firm hold, and sent forth suckers innumerable, to withdraw the vitality and moral purity from our social soil, we discover that after all it must be rooted up and destroyed, and accordingly means are adopted for its destruction or eradication. Modern civilisation, in this respect, does not contrast favourably with ancient.

We have seen that "vicious parents make vicious children." The father who frequents "The Canine Tavern" or "the card-playing beer-house," by his conduct drives his children in search of food to the streets. The vagabondage consequent upon this brings the children into the society of those who frequent the gambling-stall. Here their propensities, already excited to unhealthy action, become directed in a vicious course, and means frequently unlawful are resorted to in order that the gratification of a depraved taste may be secured. "The minor theatre" or "the singing saloon," where all decency is set at nought, is next had recourse to; then "the penny ale-cellar" and "the whisky-den" lead on to "the two-penny lodging-house." Thus is the youth fully prepared and trained to enter on a criminal course; and when we have permitted him to be so trained, and he becomes hardened and daring in acts of criminality—when he ceases to have the slightest respect for law or authority of any sort, and has learned to live by plundering—then he has qualified himself for an industrial training, and we in the the most serious manner set about affording him the means of obtaining this.

It has long been the wish of several benevolent and philanthropic merchants connected with the port, that Liverpool should make an effort to reclaim some of the juvenile delinquents who infest the streets and swarm about the docks. To clothe, educate, and train these boys for a maritime life seemed a fitting object to enlist the sympathies of the community; of wicked, depraved, and dangerous boys to make daring and dauntless sons of Neptune was in every way worthy of a great effort. This effort was made, and crowned with success worthy of the energy by which it was characterised. A committee was appointed, the hearty co-operation of several large shipowners and merchant princes secured, and negotiations entered upon; the result was, Government granted to the committee the Akbar Hulk, in order that it might be fitted up as a training school or reformatory for juvenile delinquents. Establishments for the reformation of juvenile offenders were then being formed in various parts of the country, under the sanction, and in some cases under the immediate direction, of Government. Reports were issued, speaking in the most encouraging terms of the success attained, and

urging on all who were desirous to grapple with this most difficult social problem, diligence and perseverance, by which they would not fail to reap the abundant reward of their labours. Cheered thus, the Liverpool committee entered with great zeal upon their work. The Akbar was a 50-gun frigate of the "old school." She had not been in commission for 30 years, but had been doing duty in the Sloyne as a receiving hulk. The commission in which she was now to be placed, and which she has since so well executed, contrasted very forcibly with the original intention of her builders; and it is to be questioned whether the vessel ever in the course of her career was devoted to so great, so good, so peaceable, so philanthropic an object as she now is—the training school of the Liverpool Juvenile Reformatory Association.

To fit and prepare this frigate for the reception of boys, to appoint officers and superintendent, entailed much labour on the committee, and involved considerable expense. Yet all was borne with willingness, and even difficulties which, whilst they were being looked at, seemed insurmountable, yielded to earnestness inspired by the purest philanthropy. It was resolved that the vessel should be moored in the Large Float at Birkenhead, and there she now remains. Alterations and interior fittings being completed so far as to admit of the reception of a few boys, the work was entered upon; and it is earnestly to be desired that it may continue to be prosecuted with the activity and zeal which, up to this time, have made it so valuable an agent in testing the most recent theories of criminal reformation. A visit to the Akbar Reformatory will not be out of place in Liverpool Life, forming, as it will do, the sequel to the series on juvenile crime.

Whilst standing on the margin of the Great Float, it was difficult to imagine that the vessel moored in the centre, presenting such a clean and smart appearance, was the abode of fifty boys taken from the destitute and dangerous class—boys who had been at war with society, who had been taken captive, and were now taught to respect and reverence the law which they had rebelled against; boys who were being trained in those habits which would lead them to see the true dignity of labour, and enable them in after years to earn their livelihood by acts of honest industry, the true source of all wealth, and man's best inheritance. On hailing the vessel, a boat was put off immediately, pulled by six boys, in charge of the boatswain. They were clean-looking lads; the day being warm, they were lightly clad, and rowed with the utmost regularity. The boatswain was a stout, ruddy-faced tar, evidently from the south of England, and his sharp-spoken "Give way, give way, youngsters," met with a hearty

response from his boat's crew, and in a few moments we ascended the steps leading to the deck of the Akbar. The place was in excellent order, the deck remarkably clean, and an air of comfort, cheerfulness, and contentment was manifested by every one we saw. On the occasion of our visit, Lieutenant Veitch, the then superintendent, very kindly went round the vessel in company, and explained, in an easy, clear, and highly intelligent manner, his mode of discipline, and its results—his hopes and fears respecting the boys, and his firm faith in the ultimate success of the undertaking. The vessel is calculated to contain 150 boys, and the number will be gradually increased until it reaches that point. The wisdom of such a step is apparent. When fifty boys are got into "good trim" have learned their duty, learned to respect their officers, to submit to discipline, which is very strict, and have—which is more important than all, for it involves everything else—learned to control themselves, and stifle or keep under those outbursts of temper which so strongly mark the class from which they spring, then, but not till then, twenty-five more boys may be introduced with some hopes of successful treatment. The staff of officers consists of the superintendent, a schoolmaster, a boatswain, a boatswain's mate, a purser, steward, carpenter, cook, and two seamen, who all reside on board. Lieutenant Veitch has had ample experience in the management of youth, having filled a very important position at Portsmouth in training boys for her Majesty's service, and is thus qualified for enforcing that discipline, and adopting those rules and regulations which have been found so highly conducive to the efficiency of our naval service. The boys on board the Akbar are divided into watches, and these are again subdivided into foretop, maintop men, &c. Every boy has his place appointed, and is taught to know and keep it. To each division a captain is appointed, and he is responsible to the superior officer for the conduct of his division. This has had a marked effect on some of the boys, and the spirit of emulation which has been thereby evoked must be attended with the best results. A list is suspended, showing the divisions and subdivisions of the crew, so that it can be ascertained in a moment where any boy is or ought to be—whether he be on deck, doing duty aloft, or at school. There is also a list of names marked as deserving and trustworthy boys. This also has been attended with beneficial results. In short, everything that an enlightened philanthropy can suggest, as having a tendency to win over these poor lads from a vicious and degraded course of life, seems to have been put into operation by the committee, and zealously carried out by the superintendent.

Whilst between-decks, we first visit that portion devoted to educational purposes. The boys have each three hours' instruction from the schoolmaster daily. Some of them in a short time have made great proficiency. The lesson books used are those of the Irish School Society. The master, a mild-spoken, elderly man, takes great delight in his work, and pointed out, with honest pride, the progress that several of the pupils had made under him. One boy, who could neither read nor write when he came on board, was now able to do both, and, in addition, had distinguished himself in arithmetic. There were dull boys here as in every other school, but on the whole the pupils would bear comparison with any school composed of the humbler classes. The special instruction given had reference to the profession for which the boys were intended, and a knowledge of the object and use of the compass was being imparted to a group of little fellows, who appeared deeply interested. There was nothing in the place, the people, or the employment to give any one the idea of a prison. or that what we now beheld was prison discipline. The boys at school seemed contented and happy; the boys on duty moved about briskly, and met you with a clear, steady gaze. The marked respect paid by every one to the superintendent, and the cheering manner in which he addressed all, were a convincing proof of the happy selection the committee had made. And whilst reflecting on what these boys were, what they might have become—what they are, and what in all probability they will become—we could not but rejoice in the arrival of that day when such means for restoring the outcasts of modern civilisation had been put into operation, and were being attended, as they are sure to be, with such good results to society at large.

We pass on now to midships, where the tables are just being let down, and on which the captains of the various messes are arranging the tin plates for dinner. When the full complement of boys is on board, this portion of the vessel will be fully occupied: at present the tables are arranged on one side only. The galley, or cookhouse, in close proximity, is fitted up in modern style, and junks of beef are being turned out and cut up for consumption by the boys. We descend to the lower deck. Here is the dormitory: the hammocks are all rolled neatly up, and laid in the centre of the floor. By these are bags, marked with large numbers. On inquiry we find that these bags contain the change of clothing for each boy, the number corresponding with the name and number on the crew list. There are days set apart for airing the bedding, and the arrangements in this, as in everything else connected with the working of the ship, and the regulations for promoting the health and comfort of the

crew, are conducted on the same principles as are adopted in the royal navy. The forepart of this deck is devoted to the hospital. It had not been much used, the boys being remarkably free from disease. There was in the hospital at this time a boy who had, whilst bathing, broken his leg. He had been some weeks laid up, was now getting better, and a little fellow was sitting by his bedside for company. This showed tenderness and sympathy on the part of the authorities here, in appointing various boys from time to time as companions for their afflicted shipmate. We were next shown "the cockpit," which is now devoted to the purposes of a store-room, and then ascended to the upper deck, where a portion of the crew on duty were engaged in sailor-like employment.

Two large water-tanks for the use of the ship had to be got on board, and a boat's crew in charge of the boatswain had put off to the Birkenhead side. The boat's crew land, and under the direction of the boatswain, and with a hearty "Yeo, heave yeo," they launch one of the tanks into the float. It is then made fast to their boat and towed off to the ship, where "a division" is making preparations for hoisting it on board. The boys are frequently sent on shore—sometimes in charge of an officer, sometimes alone; but no attempt had up to this time been made at escape. A few days before this, a boy had been sent across to Liverpool, and had to wait at the pier-head a very considerable time, and was thus afforded every opportunity for desertion; but he wisely set a proper value on the industrial training which he was receiving on board the Akbar, and stood to his colours. What is most to be regretted when the boys are thus sent on shore is not their conduct, but the conduct of those whom they meet, and who in many cases, by coarse jokes and heartless jeers, remind the lads of their position. This never fails to irritate and create feelings of resentment. Yet, notwithstanding this, their behaviour, all things considered, is most exemplary. On Sunday, the boys frequently are sent to the Floating Church, Birkenhead, and their conduct is spoken of by the superintendent in terms of great commendation.

There is one day in each month set apart by the committee in order that the friends or relatives of these boys may be enabled to visit them. On these occasions it not unfrequently happens that trifling presents are brought, consisting of sweets, handkerchiefs, &c., and in many cases much affection and good feeling are displayed. This interchange of thought with parents, relatives, or friends must be productive of good to both sides. It is impossible for any but those of the most degraded and utterly abandoned and hopeless class to look on and converse with these lads, considering the meanwhile the causes and circumstances which have brought them together,

without at the same time feeling impressed by a sense of gratitude for the advantages, moral, social, and physical, which they here enjoy. Strive to imagine the feelings of a guilty parent—one who, although not entirely destitute of parental affection, has so far neglected his duty to his offspring as to allow them to spring up uneducated by the school, but entrusted to the streets; one who, instead of setting an example of industry and temperance before his children, has shown them nothing but idleness, intemperance, and all the train of vicious and degrading pastimes which spring from this source; who, instead of assembling his children around his own fireside, has permitted them to roam abroad at night, and thus fall an easy prey to the dangerous snares of crime with which our town is beset: what would the feelings of such a man be on meeting with his son on board the Akbar? The resolution of the committee to admit parents and friends displays great wisdom and sound practical philanthropy. The poor criminal, the degraded parents, have hearts to soften: what better means could be adopted for the purpose?

Such is a brief sketch of what is being done on board the Akbar. The cost of fitting the vessel up was about £1500; the cost of maintenance per head will, it is expected, be about £23 per annum; and, seeing how much Liverpool owes to her sailors, this reformatory ought not to be allowed to suffer for want of support. Some of the boys have been trained and sent off on long voyages: the best hopes are entertained of their success. It must be borne in mind that all the boys here are not of home growth, so to speak: they are not juvenile delinquents who have been reared in our own town. The captain of the boat that brought us on shore, a fine, stout lad, was from Gloucestershire, and one of the boat's crew was from a distant town. But all the lads here have manifested a taste or inclination for the adventurous life of a sailor; and the committee, in the true spirit of liberality and Christian charity, undertake to prepare them for the proper discharge of its duties. Their object is worthy of the highest regard, and their mode of carrying it out a credit to the community.

We ought to state, before concluding, that on the 20th of December the committee lost the valuable services of Lieutenant Veitch, who has been appointed by the Admiralty to be the superintendent of Haslar Hospital. His leaving was a source of deep regret to every member of the committee, seeing the truly energetic and hopeful spirit which he brought to bear upon his labours. He has been succeeded by Captain Fenwick, R.N., who, the committee have every reason to expect, will carry on the work so well begun by Lieutenant Veitch. The number of boys at present in training is sixty-one.

CHAPTER IX.

IN a former chapter it was shown what the corporation of Liverpool, as represented by the town council, had done to improve the moral and social condition of the town, by the establishment of public baths and wash-houses; and it was contended that constant purification of the body not unfrequently led to purification of the mind. Our local governors have not rested satisfied with this, but, taking advantage of the act introduced and passed by the Legislature, through the instrumentality of a Liverpool man, William Ewart, they have established for the people a Free Public Library, which, whether viewed in its relation to its character or results, must be looked on as a great boon and a substantial blessing to the community. It is mainly to the untiring energy, active and intelligent zeal, combined with much practical sagacity, of the committee, of which Mr. J. A. Picton is chairman, that the town stands indebted for what will ere long be its great glory; and it was a proud day for them, and a day to be remembered by the inhabitants of Liverpool, when the library was publicly opened by the Mayor, Thomas Littledale, Esq., at what was known as the Union Newsroom, in Duke-street, on the 18th of October, 1852.

In the outset a large sum of money had been raised by public subscription for the purchase of books, and many donations of books were made by individuals. The committee appointed by the council for the management of the library proceeded in their work with the utmost caution. "Their beginning was small, but in the end it greatly increased." Notwithstanding that they had the power to levy a library and museum rate, they did not take full advantage of this power until such time as they had learned the wishes and wants of the people, how they could be best met, and how the public, for whose especial benefit the library was intended, would appreciate the privileges. "There were prophets in these days," and failure was clearly predicted by men who are always filled with fearful forebodings. "The library might take for a month, then it would be shut up;" "It would last until most of the books were carried away and sold, then there would be an end of it." The first of these prophecies, taking a specific form and fixing a date, was soon set at rest. The second, being somewhat general in its character, and no date being fixed for its fulfilment, calls for a word or two of remark. In 1855 the number of books issued and returned was 131,912; in 1856 the number was 153,169; and out of this total of 285,081 books, the committee report the loss of only one book, and that of

trifling value. This fact places the fulfilment of the second prophecy almost beyond our age. It was also supposed that to expect men, and particularly those of the working classes, to attend a reading-room with such regularity or in such numbers as to warrant the outlay of a large sum of public money for the purpose of its support, was one of those chimeras appertaining to the last stage of that malady which attaches itself to men who are known to have and act upon "progressive tendencies." To entertain such notion was to have a "diseased imagination;" and other equally innocent conclusions were arrived at by those who had no heart, neither had they faith, in this or any other good work.

The object of the committee was and is to make the library chiefly valuable as a great library of reference. To this end they have enriched it with rare and valuable works, of which more hereafter; still they did not lose sight of making a proper provision for the requirements of the toiling artisan, and therefore have paid especial attention to the leading works in most departments of literature, science, and art, with a judicious sprinkling of magazines, reviews, and periodicals; and although this library has been in operation over four years, and has issued such a vast number of books as was noticed, it is nevertheless a fact that thousands in the town know nothing of its advantages, and we have seen men dumb with amazement on learning that there were in the public library in Duke-street 21,020 volumes to look at, read, or refer to, to do any of which there was nothing required but cleanliness of person, civility of speech, and the observance of a simple form which does not in any way amount to the slightest restriction.

The library, in the first instance, was confined to the room known as the Union Newsroom, about half of the apartment being devoted to readers, the other half to the librarian and books. Every day during the winter of 1852-3 saw the room filled with attentive readers—every night saw it crowded. It was no unusual thing to see young men squatting on the floor in tailor fashion, thus resting and reading after the labours of the day. Nor was it a solitary instance where the porter of the room had to turn away from the doors hungry souls who sought for food. A gallery was erected for books. This gave a little more room for readers. Then way was made into the house next door, which was filled with books. This gave more room for readers. And since this another house has been broken into, until, as one of the readers said, when looking at the progress of the library, "These chaps will go down Duke-street until they get to the Custom-house; that would be the library for them, only it's so ugly!" The committee have now made the

utmost of the room. It is fitted in a comfortable, substantial style; the walls are decorated with four good pictures, by Tintorello, Vandyke, Lebrun, and Fuseli: the latter is an allegorical sketch of the "Union," painted for the newsroom, which was established about the time Fuseli flourished. There is for reference a set of magnificent maps on a continuous roller, being about 250 feet in length; and dictionaries, gazetteers, and other works of similar character are so placed that immediate reference may be made. The room is not calculated to hold more than 120 or 130 persons, but frequently from 170 to 200 are present; and the ventilation, which at any time is very imperfect, on such crowded occasions renders the room what it has not inaptly been called, "the free public oven." Mr. Robertson Gladstone complains loudly of the council chamber and the headache it inflicts upon him; what would he say were he compelled to make his bread in this "oven," or to stand the drying and bleaching the officials here endure? Yet, notwithstanding this drawback, we find the average daily issue of books during the past year to be 543, and the crowding of readers still continues—a convincing proof of the hold this establishment has taken on the public mind, and the absolute necessity that exists for what the committee have so earnestly and successfully striven—increased accommodation.

The rules and regulations adopted by the committee for conducting the reading-room and reference library are extremely simple, judicious, and sound, without being severe or restrictive in character; and the carrying out of these rules and regulations is entrusted to those who deeply feel the importance of the trust reposed in them, and who are led to act as much from a principle of love for and in their work, as from a high moral conviction of public duty. In Mr. J. S. Dalton the committee have secured a servant rightly imbued with a just appreciation of his office, a man of good taste, pleasing manners, and amiable disposition, and whose refinement of feeling and love for the simple, beautiful, and true, as exemplified in the poems we have seen from his pen, lead to the belief that he might with credit to himself add to the library a volume of his own. It has been a source of great pleasure to observe the care, attention, and consideration which he used very frequently to bestow on many of the readers who frequented the library, before his time was so much absorbed as it now is by the details of his office, consequent upon the increase of books and readers. Many young men have by him been aided in the selection of books, have received hints as to the proper use to make of their time, and been judiciously guided in their studies. And all this is done in an unobtrusive style, which has created for him much good feeling and deep respect. In

all his efforts to promote the success of the institution and the comfort of those who avail themselves of the rich stores which it offers in such a liberal manner, Mr. Dalton is ably seconded by his assistant, Mr. Hudson, whose time we see is now more devoted to the working of the library. This gentleman will be kind enough to unlock the treasures for our inspection, and accompany us through the library during a visit. It may prove interesting to our readers if they accompany us.

It is eight o'clock in the evening; the night is intensely cold, and a drizzling rain which has been falling for two hours past does not add to the comfort or cheerfulness of the pedestrian. The library in Duke-street, well lighted and cheerful-looking, presents attractions to all passers. At the door you find the porter—smart, civil, and quite police-inspectorish in appearance. He directs you to the counter, where a catalogue is placed, and after selecting what book you wish to read or refer to, you fill up a form which one of the boys hands to you: on this you write your name, address, and the title of the book you require, which, if it be not in use, is immediately handed to you. Making your way to a seat at one of the tables—or near the fire if you can get room—sit down and enjoy yourself. The room is well filled, but everything proceeds with order and regularity, and the deepest silence prevails. This admirable order and respectful attention may in some degree be attributed to the prevailing rule, that all visitors, of whatever grade, are treated as gentlemen, which no doubt produces corresponding self-respect and a desire to deserve courteous attention. By the number of young people who come in, particularly in the evening, works of imagination are a good deal read. But these, from the catalogue, appear to be well selected, and no doubt combine much instruction with amusement, besides acting as a stepping-stone to history, biography, and other more valuable contributions to knowledge. Many readers have been observed to take this course; but the constant succession of new readers, in a fluctuating population such as ours, renders it difficult for the librarian to form a true estimate of the progress in this direction. We observe several students making extracts from works, probably connected with their various professions; others drawing, with scale and compass, from diagrams, of shipbuilding, architecture, and ornamental art. The most elaborate and costly works on these subjects are by such means placed within the reach of the poorest artisans.

Being desirous of seeing the rarer and more elegantly illustrated books on science, literature, and art, we are politely invited to pass round the counter, and our guide proceeds to unlock the cases where

these treasures are stored. Here is a copy, in excellent condition, of that magnificent work, Lord Kingsborough's "Mexican Antiquities," with its thousand illustrations, in nine volumes large folio. The publication of 250 copies of this work is said to have exceeded £30,000. This cost, and the anxiety consequent upon so great an undertaking, brought the nobleman to a prison and a premature grave. Here are "Gould's Birds;" the best works illustrating the Great Exhibition; works on Architecture and Antiquities, of surpassing beauty; Macklin's Bible, a superb copy; Halliwell's folio Shakespeare; and the Binns Collection of prints, plans, maps, and drawings, illustrating the history of our county, the whole arranged in thirty volumes, bound in a substantial manner, for reference. The purchase of this Collection was severely criticised and condemned by many persons at the time; but were they to visit, inspect, and reflect on the probable importance to the town of this Collection, they might yet be inclined to congratulate the Council on their decision. It is impossible in a short sketch to give a glance at half of the rare, valuable, and gorgeously illustrated volumes with which the committee have enriched the library. Our only hope is that what has been said may induce many of our townsmen to visit the library, and they will, after entrusting themselves to the gentlemanly guidance of Mr. Hudson, come away with the impression that the people of Liverpool owe a debt of gratitude to the library committee, through whose fostering care and vigilance the institution has obtained such eminence in so short a time.

Having thus far described the parent tree of knowledge, the branches now claim attention. These are the North and South Lending Libraries. The committee had the matter of lending libraries forced upon their attention at a very early period of their labours, but they wisely weighed and watched the progress of similar institutions in other towns before they took the step. It was a great undertaking—one of vital importance viewed in relation to the moral and social life of the operative classes—and the work was commenced with becoming caution. In October, 1853, the Lending Libraries were opened at the North and South Corporation Schools, for the issue of books, with about 2000 volumes and 30 readers. This the committee felt to be an experiment, and therefore obtained the services of some of the junior teachers of the schools to distribute the books. We visited the South Lending Library during some of the first weeks of its existence, and used to be amused at the musical efforts of one of the librarians to while away his time whilst waiting for customers. The rapid increase of readers, as the fact of the establishment became known, soon caused the flute to be laid aside,

and in a month or two from the opening this industrious little fellow was playing a totally different tune, and we are glad to see that he still continues in the service of the committee, although the opportunities of pursuing his musical education must be very much abridged. The demand made on the lending department was unparalleled, and the committee, to meet this, had to remove the libraries to more commodious premises, and appoint a superintendent. The gentleman appointed, and who still fills the office with such zeal and assiduity, was Mr. W. R. Roulston. He had received a good training at the Lyceum Library, had an excellent knowledge of books, was well acquainted with the details of a lending library, felt strongly that desire for improvement which his office enabled him to strengthen, gratify, and impart to others, and he came to the committee warmly recommended as "the right man for the right place." Such, we believe, he has proved himself to be. His suavity of manners, his activity, his heartiness in the work, and his attention to the wants and wishes of the readers have rendered him very popular, which was clearly evinced on the occasion of his marriage, by the readers presenting him with a costly and elegant testimonial. The South Library was removed to Hardy-street, and the North Library to Great Nelson-street. Both libraries are open daily from nine to two, and in consequence of the immense increase of readers, it has now been resolved to open them four evenings in the week, from six to nine, instead of two evenings, as formerly. The necessity for this may be seen clearly from the following facts.

At present the number of volumes in both libraries exceeds 13,000; but, large as this number may appear, it is far from being adequate to supply the great demand, each book at present being issued on an average 17 times in the course of a year; and the whole libraries may be said to be turned over about once every fortnight. During the year which has just closed, 229,348 volumes have been lent. In the class theology, morality, and metaphysics, the issues have been 6,953 volumes; history and biography, 25,646; voyages and travels, 14,247; science and the arts, 4,255; natural philosophy, 3,564; natural history, 2,967; poetry and the drama, 3,599; miscellaneous literature, 21,963; and under the heads commerce, education, &c., 5,131 volumes have been lent. The remainder issued have been works of imagination. Whilst on this feature of the libraries it may be well to observe that our neighbours at Manchester, in the last report of their public library, take occasion to blow the trumpet rather loudly, and proclaim to the world that their issue of books during the past four years is "without a parallel in the United Kingdom, except in the instance of the great national library

of the British Museum," whereas the facts show Liverpool to be in excess of Manchester *only* 306,357, the figures being—Liverpool, 891,148; Manchester, 584,792. But perhaps, after all, our friends wish in this matter, as in others, to ignore the existence of Liverpool! The average daily issue of books from the Manchester Lending Library, during the year 1856 was 287, whilst Liverpool issued 739; or, taking the daily average for reference and lending libraries in both towns, we find Manchester 523, Liverpool 1,282. What say our friends to this parallel?

We have heard and noticed in the public prints complaints respecting the selection of books; the purchasing of duplicates of standard works is recommended, instead of expending money on a light and almost indifferent class of novels; and there is force in some of the objections. But, notwithstanding these, the committee, having done so well, must not be supposed to have lost sight of these matters. The library is yet but in its infancy, and is fast becoming a healthy and promising offspring. We have reason to know that duplicates of most of the standard works will at once be secured: and it is to be hoped also that an attempt will be made to wean the minds of our youth from the over-exciting and highly stimulating effects of a large class of novels. It is said the people demand this class—they will have it. Perhaps so; but the Corporation need not supply it. If the taste be vicious or questionable, why pander to it? If the libraries are well stocked with useful and instructive books, the people will take these rather than go without; and the committee, in catering for the public taste, would do well to try by gentle and persuasive means to, direct it—to lead it rather than to follow it. To the young man blessed with virtuous parents and a happy home, the effect of an exciting novel may be of little consequence, as the social purity and domestic joys counteract or destroy any evil influence; but to the poor youth who, though desirous of extending his knowledge, and anxious to press on in life, has to pursue his course of reading interrupted frequently by the discord of a disorderly home and drunken parents, the case is very different. What has he to counteract the evil tendency of an unhealthy book? Yet, amongst the thousands of readers of our lending libraries, how many hundreds are there in this position!

From the popularity which these libraries have already attained, it is not surprising that we find amongst the list of readers almost all classes of the community—clergymen, surgeons, solicitors, mechanics, all sorts of tradesmen, and office and shop boys in large numbers. The great bulk of the readers are under 21 years of age, which is a hopeful sign, for an old writer observes, "He who

loves not books before he come to 30 years of age, will hardly love them enough afterwards to understand them;" and it is a pleasing fact, that out of 8,000 persons called upon to sign their names when first receiving a loan of books, only eight or ten were unable to do so. The mode of obtaining the privileges which these libraries offer is extremely simple. A person desirous of becoming a reader calls at the library, where he is provided with a guarantee form: to this he obtains the signature of two respectable housekeepers, one of whom must be a burgess. These persons become responsible to the committee for the care and safe return of the books. This, being duly signed, is left at the library, and one week is then allowed to elapse in order to afford the librarian an opportunity to test the guarantee, which, if found satisfactory, a ticket is immediately issued, and books can be obtained. During the past week 5,801 volumes have been issued by the Lending Library, and, view this as you may, a great and permanent influence is thereby being exercised. Hence the great necessity for caution and discrimination in the selection of books. The success of the experiment is as much beyond all expectation as the earnest and laudable efforts of the library committee are worthy of the town's gratitude.

We cannot conclude a subject of such deep interest to the public without noticing the munificent offer of William Brown, Esq., M.P., with reference to the building of a new public library—an offer that will redound to the credit of his name, and will be looked upon with admiration, as contrasting strongly with the sordid spirit of the age, when viewed by the increased intelligence of future generations. The library committee had resolved on building a new library and museum; the site was fixed on, and the act passed. What followed is the town's talk, and no credit to the town either. Mr. Brown had in the first instance offered £6,000 towards this object. This was increased to £12,000; and when he saw from the discussions which took place the obstacles likely to arise in carrying out what he wished, and by his extremely liberal offer intended, he steps forward and offers to save the council any talk or trouble, and the town any expense, by completing the building for a free public library at his own cost. Talk of a statue or a portrait of such a man! He by this great and, so far as Liverpool is concerned, unparalleled act of munificence, erects for himself an imperishable monument, and thousands yet unborn may derive lasting blessings from his act, whilst they speak with reverence and gratitude of William Brown, the founder of the Liverpool Free Public Library.

CHAPTER X.

THE Liverpool Derby Museum occupies a portion of the same building, and is watched over and directed by the same committee, as the Free Library. It consists principally of the extensive and valuable zoological collection formed by the late Earl of Derby, and such specimens as have been added by the committee, or presented by individuals anxious to promote a knowledge of natural history. It contains, also, the collections of samples of imports, and model of the docks and portion of the town adjacent, both of which were got up at considerable expense as the local contribution to the Great Exhibition of 1851. To this has been added a model of Liverpool as it was supposed to appear in the middle of the seventeenth century. The whole is thrown open for public inspection, and forms one of the most interesting and instructive, and, we are glad to add, attractive exhibitions of which the town can boast. It is a fact worthy of notice, that large numbers of excursionists who visit Liverpool during the summer months avail themselves of the opportunity to ramble through the museum, and the comments and criticisms of these country cousins, whilst passing through the rooms, would of themselves form matter of peculiar interest to students in natural history, or those who are more particularly interested in the progress of the *genus homo*. The broad liberal principle on which the museum is founded, and which gives the same privileges to the denizens of other towns who may chance to visit us as it does to those of our own, cannot be too highly extolled. There is here no exclusive privilege; all may pass through the turnstile of the Slater-street entrance "without let or hindrance," and wander pleasantly in the vast field of knowledge here so carefully cultivated and preserved by the town council and burgesses of the borough of Liverpool.

The Derby Collection was presented to the corporation by the present earl, in conformity with the express wish of his father, who was desirous that what had cost him the labour of a long and active life, and the outlay of immense sums of money, to bring together, might be properly preserved to future generations, as some exponent of the wonderful diversity and beauty of this portion of nature's productions. His lordship was further induced to grant the bequest in the hope that by such means the collection would extend to others, and especially to the young, a measure of the great gratification which he had himself derived through life from the study and contemplation of objects of natural history. It consists of a valuable

series of quadrupeds, and one of the most extensive collections of birds ever formed. To these may be added a large collection of eggs, and a number of reptiles and fish. Very few of the latter are exhibited, for want of space. The total number of quadrupeds and birds exceeds 20,000, the birds numbering nearly 19,000; of the latter, a large portion were presented unstuffed, and so remain for want of room to display them. The skins are nearly 8,000 in number; the stuffed specimens amount to 11,000.

In noticing a museum of so vast a character, it will be impossible to give anything like an adequate description of what it contains. Having visited it many times, and with increased interest, our only hope is to point out to our fellow-townsmen, more particularly those of the operative class, the pleasing and rational enjoyment here provided for their leisure hours; and further, it is enjoyment which parents and children can with advantage participate in together. This, in a social point of view, makes it still more effective in weaning the mind from the grosser forms of pleasure in which too many of the working population indulge. It is as pleasing a sight as can be witnessed to visit the museum, on Monday more particularly, and see the artisan and his family enjoying the variety of form and plumage of the birds, or gazing in amazement and admiration at the wonderful collection it contains.

On entering the museum, the visitor should not fail to notice the aquarium which is placed between the turnstile. This contains shells, insects, fresh water fish, and plants. There are two smaller ones in the front room, and to watch the movements of the creatures herein proves extremely interesting. We witnessed the attack of two beetles and a jacksharp on a small eel, and the sagacity and ingenuity displayed by all engaged were a source of great pleasure. The obtaining and supplying these aquariums were an experiment on the part of the committee, which has so far proved eminently successful, and no doubt the matter will speedily be entered upon on a much larger scale, and a table will be entirely devoted to such an interesting exhibition. There are in the room several groups of birds in glass cases—honey-eaters. The birds and nests in these cases deserve particular attention, the arrangement being such as to display the habits of the birds. The male, female, and young are all shown in their different stages of development and varieties of plumage from youth to maturity. The two rooms on the ground floor are principally devoted to quadrupeds, some extraordinary fossils presented to the museum, and the "collection of imports," arranged by Mr. T. C. Archer. There are four rooms upstairs devoted to birds and the models. In the first room are ten oil-

paintings by the celebrated Catlin, representing hunting exploits, &c. They display more truthfulness in detail and arrangement than any of the higher qualities of art; and in the second room are portraits of the founder and his son, the present earl.

The quadrupeds number about 1,200, a very considerable portion of which were unstuffed when received. Accommodation, but certainly of a very limited character, has been found in the cases for the smaller specimens, which have accordingly been stuffed. The larger animals—such as deer, antelopes, &c.—remain yet to be mounted and exhibited, which cannot be done until the contemplated new building is prepared for them. The specimens already stuffed and mounted have been entrusted to the most experienced taxidermists, and are rendered as life-like as possible. The group of sloths may especially be pointed out. Their positions illustrate the peculiar habits of this remarkable animal, of which Waterton, in his "Wanderings," gives such a graphic description. The sloth is said to be born to live and to die amongst the trees; and we are enabled to see from these specimens, especially by the conformation of their feet and claws, how exquisitely they are fitted for such a mode of life.

The collection of quadrupeds appears to be richest in ruminating animals, or those of the deer and antelope kind; and in the rodent or gnawing animals—such as squirrels, rats, and the like. The monkeys and the beasts of prey are only inadequately represented. It is said the late Earl of Derby had no liking for these, either in the living or dead state. Many specimens of large size—such as the giraffe, hippopotamus, &c.—which came into his lordship's possession, were not retained, but were presented to the national collection, or to the Zoological Society of London. It will, be seen, by observing the labels attached to many of the specimens, that they "died at Knowsley," several, indeed, having been born there. His lordship had at Knowsley a living collection unequalled in any country, his special object being to introduce to England, and if possible to naturalise, such animals and birds as he considered might prove ornamental and useful. Amongst quadrupeds he particularly endeavoured to naturalise deer, antelopes, and cattle; and amongst birds all those of the game kind, and various species of waterfowl. For this purpose he laid out extensive paddocks, erected costly buildings, and had altogether 100 acres of land, and as many of water, devoted to his object. This gave employment to about fifty persons—keepers, mechanics, and labourers. To supply specimens he fitted out several foreign expeditions at his own expense. He employed collectors, and had correspondents, in all parts of the globe. The result was the importation of numerous species never before

seen alive in England, and the successful breeding of many promising to be highly useful. Amongst the latter must be noticed the Eland antelope, the largest of the kind, equalling ordinary cattle in size. These are now in possession of the Zoological Society, and several varieties of Indian cattle, especially the large Brahmin breed, of which a valuable cross is retained at Knowsley. Amongst birds may be noticed wild turkeys of North America, the Impeyan pheasant, the most gorgeous of its tribe, which is now in the possession of the Queen, and a splendid species from Japan; together with several kinds of pigeons and waterfowl. These facts are stated for the purpose of supplying information which we have heard and seen many in search of during our visits to the Derby Museum.

The collection of birds is exceeded in this country only by that in the British Museum. No provincial collection approaches it in number or variety of specimens. The great beauty of form and plumage seen in this portion of the exhibition never fails to give great pleasure to the visitor, and the care, taste, and judgment displayed in the arrangement reflect the highest credit on the curator, Mr. T. J. Moore. We have been fortunate enough, on one or two occasions, to find this gentleman out of his own room and in the museum during our visit, and have derived pleasure and profit from his conversation. He is in real earnest about his work, and devotes to the duties of his office the zeal of an enthusiastic naturalist. Several carefully written descriptions, which are suspended from the cases, attest the interest he feels in imparting that information to others in which he so much delights himself; whilst the neatly executed skeletons interspersed both with the quadrupeds and birds prove how desirous he is that the student, no less than the more ordinary observer, should derive the full benefit of his labours.

Amongst the most interesting specimens of this part of the museum we may notice, in "Case 100," the Kiwi or Apteryx, from New Zealand, a wingless bird. This was the first specimen brought to Europe. Naturalists were so far doubtful as to whether this was not a *made-up bird* as to require it to be turned inside out before an assembly of *savans* before they were convinced of its being genuine! The bird stood this test, which many clothes-wearing animals would shrink from or shudder at, and is therefore properly classed. In Cases 86 and 111 may be seen two other birds of remarkable character, each the first of its kind brought to Europe. They were obtained by a collector sent to Honduras, and have been named, in honour of the late earl, "*Oreophasis Derbrianus*," and "*Chauna Derbiana*." The first is remarkable for having a horny projection on its head, and being otherwise different from all other known birds.

The second belongs to the tribe of birds called "screamers," on account of their harsh notes, only two species of which were previously known. The owls are very fully represented; and in case 77 are specimens of the "owl parrot," from New Zealand—a remarkable species, having the general features of the parrot, but the eyes are adorned with radiatory feathers, as in some of the owls. In the same case are specimens of the Philip Island parrot, which is said to be recently quite exterminated by the cats or rats with which the island abounds.

The British birds appear to be inadequately represented; but these being easy of acquirement, except the rarer visitants, the committee, when they have a proper space at their disposal, will, no doubt, soon remedy this. The nests and eggs form a curious and interesting study, and the specimens here are in an excellent state of preservation. The wonderfully constructed nests of the weaver birds, one or two of which are suspended, showing the bird's mode of ingress and egress, attract the attention of most visitors. The attendants in the various rooms are very civil and obliging, and are ever ready to satisfy the minds of the curious with reference to the names, habits, &c., of the birds and animals that surround them.

The two models of Liverpool form very attractive features in the museum. That of modern Liverpool is on a scale of eight feet to the mile, and includes a distance of five miles along the river front. It was one of the best models in the Great Crystal Palace, attracted crowds, and formed a regular place of meeting for all Liverpool people. Go there when you would, some "Dickey Sam" would be astonishing the natives by showing them "our house." And it is a singular feature that here you rarely see a person examining it that resides in the town who does not in the first instance look for his own residence, or his governor's shop or office, as the case may be; and if he be able to fix on the precise house, he walks away with an air of smiling satisfaction, and the model of Liverpool assumes ever after in his eyes a degree of importance which a stranger cannot possibly estimate. This model gives a better idea of the river, docks, and town, as a whole, than can be obtained by any other means, whether by personal inspection or by plans or drawings, and it will remain a lasting memorial of the shape, state, and extent of the port of Liverpool, though not of the town itself, at the period represented. It will, moreover, serve to point out the various improvements, alterations and disfigurements thereafter effected. It already shows considerable change in one locality. In 1851, St. George's Hall was not enclosed within its balustrades, neither were the lions or the candle-

sticks then in existence. So far for disfigurements. Then as to improvements, the warehouses round the Stanley and other docks had not been raised, nor was the magnificent office architecture which is now adorning our town in existence. It is by viewing it in this light that we may see how rapidly this model will increase in interest and value, and how much an equally authentic representation of Liverpool fifty years back would be appreciated.

The model purporting to represent Liverpool as it stood two centuries ago is the work of Mr. Augustus Harding, and so far as we have been able to judge from old maps and plans, some of which are found in the "Binns Collection," it appears to give a tolerable idea of the fishing village. It is evidently a work of great labour, and the execution of it exhibits much ingenuity and skill. The contrast between ancient and modern Liverpool, as seen in these models, is very striking, and the reflections to which they give rise are numerous and serious. Here is represented an increase of population and wealth which for rapidity cannot be equalled in the kingdom. Scarcely a building now stands which is represented in the ancient model; and yet we have talked with men, jolly old fellows, who recollect the burning of the old Town Hall, and the glorious doings at the jubilee of George III. Others there are who dwell with pride on the days when they went snipe-shooting in Bold-street, or bathed on the shore where now huge blocks of granite keep out the tide and form lasting bulwarks to the docks of Liverpool. We have bought tops in Castle-ditch, spent our pocket-money in apples at the old market, top of Moor-street, and bathed where the Waterloo Dock now stands. Yet look at the change in our time.

The museum is chiefly remarkable as an illustration of the highest class, or vertebrated animals, containing few insects or shells—these are very fully illustrated by the Royal Institution, in Slater-street. It is open to the public from ten till dusk, on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday, Tuesday and Friday being reserved for cleaning, or for artists and students who may wish to avail themselves of the information it affords. In the outset the committee fixed Saturday as one of those days on which it should be closed, but finding that this was the day on which large numbers of persons came on cheap trips from distant towns, they very wisely resolved to open the museum for their amusement and instruction.

We are very glad to see from the returns published by the committee that the Derby Museum attracts such vast numbers daily. None can visit the place without receiving benefit in some form. Last year the number of visitors was 106,914, being a daily average

of 524, and of these a large majority were excursionists from the manufacturing districts. Even our friends from Manchester avail themselves largely of the advantages of the museum; and the crowds of operatives from the inland towns have their holiday excursions rendered more pleasant and profitable to reflect on by an hour or two spent in the Liverpool Derby Museum.

CHAPTER XI.

THE Sketches of Liverpool Life would be very imperfect if we omitted to notice "The Homes of the People." There is much written and spoken just now concerning the labouring classes. Their habits, their homes, and the improvement required or sought for in these matters are being placed before the public in a variety of ways. Each man who speaks or writes professes to have discovered the true and only remedy for all the evils—moral, social, domestic, or political—under which the working population is said to groan. It is idle to talk of anything in the way of improvement, says one, unless you first of all impress the mind with the importance of religion. Another is convinced, and declares with equal confidence, that the one thing needful is total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks. A third erects the standard of education, and is of opinion that were the education of the people properly attended to, all other good would follow. A fourth says, Give the people comfortable homes; let them have houses to live in, and not "abominable filthy styes," where all decency must of necessity be set at nought: then, and only then, you may expect to wean men from their degrading habits, and lessen the attraction of the card-playing beer-house or the glaringly-lighted gin-palace. The men are not so much to blame, says a fifth; it is to the women, the wives of working men, that you should look if you ever expect to influence their social position. Let a man have a good wife; to this end educate girls in such manner as will enable them to become frugal and thrifty, patient, painstaking, and clean in their habits, and so form proper partners for working men. This done, you need not fear the result. In all these proposed remedies there may be—nay, undoubtedly is—a portion of truth, but of no one proposal can it be said this is all you require in order to place the moral and social progress of the people on a sound and satisfactory basis.

How few there are of the reading or thinking portion of the

public who really know what it is that constitutes the life of the working man. To what books, to what reports, to what statistics can you refer and be enabled to see what are the hopes, fears, joys, sorrows, temptations, and triumphs which go to make up the social life of the labourer? Then as to his dwelling, his home, where do you find that depicted? The character of the street or court may be described; the peculiar construction of his house may be pointed out; the condition in which it appears on a given day may be accurately noticed—yet what false views these all may give of a working man's home. That improvement in the construction of dwellings for the humbler classes is much needed admits of no doubt. That this improvement has begun, and is being carried on amongst us, is a gratifying fact, which it will be our duty to allude to hereafter. But that improvement in construction or ventilation of a house will effect the wonderful change in the character of the inmates that some well-intentioned persons expect and look for we do not believe. An intimate acquaintance with the various classes amongst our working population, and some observation of their manners and customs, induce scepticism in this particular.

The suggestions that are thrown out and the plans that are being adopted for bettering the condition of the people prove one thing—the anxiety and manifest earnestness of the so-called upper or middle class to alleviate the sorrows or mitigate the sufferings of their brethren in humbler life. All that seems necessary, therefore, now, is *direction*. The earnest and determined *will* is apparent, yet the *way* is not made clear. In the matter of the amusements and pastimes of the people we have shown what they are, leaving it for others to point out what they should be. So in the social life of the people, as shown in their homes, we purpose to point out what it was and is, leaving it for those who are anxious on the subject to say what it should be. For obvious reasons names and localities must be withheld; but the facts will lose nothing of their interest to the social reformer on that account.

A very large majority of the working classes of this town reside in “courts.” Those constructed before the Health of Towns Bill passed are ill-contrived, badly ventilated, miserable-looking dwellings. In some districts there are whole streets composed almost entirely of such: for instance, look at Duckinfield-street in the east of the town; Albert-street and others adjoining in the south; and Hornby or Paul-street in the north. These court-houses are frequently four stories high, “straight up and down,” and contain four apartments—a cellar, a living room, and two bedrooms; and often in these houses two and sometimes three families reside.

At the top of the court stand the open cesspool and privy. The houses adjoining these are sometimes let at a lower rent : thus poor creatures have a premium offered them for the loss of their health and the possibility of cutting short their days. The rents vary from 2s. 9d. to 4s. 6d., according to locality. The class of houses built since the operation of our health committee it has been felt are a great improvement on the older courts, the law compelling builders to have such blocks of dwellings "open at the ends," and otherwise ensuring modes of ventilation and cleanliness. In order to show the social life of the people, we request the reader's company to one of the courts in our town. It is not one of the worst class, but may be looked on as second-class, the houses and people in which will represent a great number of those that surround us. There are in it four houses, the rents of which are 3s. 3d. per week. This court is approached by a narrow passage, and in the passage are two houses, or rather the entrances to them. The court is about four yards wide, is flagged, and there are two houses on each side. The character of the inmates is clearly indicated to some extent by the exterior, yet in these matters it is not always safe to judge by appearances; therefore enter house Number One.

This house, a few years ago, was the residence of a shipwright who held a responsible situation, and whose relations were in a respectable sphere of life. He received two guineas per week as wages; had his wife and two children (girls) to support; the other children were earning their own living, and two daughters were married. The house contained good furniture, which presented the appearance of ill-use and neglect; and everything about the place was disorderly and careless. It was not positively a dirty house, but was in all respects slovenly. If you wished to sit down you would have to move a towel, a basket of potatoes, or a knife off the chair before doing so. The ashes would be heaped up under the grate, and the breakfast things would not be "sided up" at eleven or twelve o'clock. The proprietor came home drunk three or four nights in each week. He abused his wife, broke the furniture, took a great delight in breaking crockery ware, on one occasion pulled down the mantelshelf—yet, notwithstanding this course of conduct, *he was regular in attendance at a place of worship on the Sabbath*, where he was seen by his father, who was an office-bearer in the church. His wife was of a very respectable family, but had—through the conduct of the husband, to a great extent—become an habitual drunkard. She drank ale, rarely ever touched spirits. She generally received a portion of the wages on Friday night, and was sometimes helplessly drunk before noon on Saturday. There

was a talking parrot in the house that used to imitate the children crying and the wife's screams when the husband was abusing her. The drunken woman's noise, the screaming of the bird, and the lamentation of the children from day to day, rendered them anything but pleasant neighbours. The children were ill-clothed, irregularly fed, and, as might be expected, used language to their parents which was lamentable to hear. Both husband and wife are since dead, and one of the daughters has become an outcast on the streets. She declares her father's conduct drove her to this wretched mode of life.

The second house was the residence of a man engaged in the building trade. He had a wife and three children; his wages were 24s. per week; but he frequently worked overtime, and thereby earned considerably more. This man's father is a tradesman in the town, has brought up a large family, and is now a respectable man. The son who resided here was a sottish, stupid-looking fellow, who formed low companionships, married young, and seemed totally indifferent to all domestic comfort. His wife, when *clean*—though it was a rare occurrence to see her so—was a decent-looking person, but her habits were idle and dissolute. The house contained very little furniture, and that of the meanest description. The children were in the main indebted to their grand-parents for clothing, and their education was almost entirely neglected. The man left home in the morning soon after five o'clock, and did not return until evening, unless he was working near enough to come to his meals. He took his coffee and bread and butter with him for breakfast, and many times the same for dinner, and rarely ever obtained a proper or comfortable meal. In this matter he represents the great majority of working men. His wife, left to herself all day, found companions in the neighbourhood, and at No. 1 she was a frequent visitor and guest. When No. 2 had cash she spent it with No. 1, and these kind offices—so they were spoken of by these people—were returned, and thus were the earnings of the men worse than wasted. The husband in this case did not abuse the wife; he did not beat her, yet he took no interest in either her or his home, and Sunday seemed a miserable day to him, for he had no clothes to appear decent, therefore rarely went out. His brothers, who were unmarried, came sometimes on Sunday to see him; then the large jug of beer would be sent for and obtained, a regular carouse would take place, every one in the house, children excepted, would be drunk at night, and on Monday morning there would be a quarter lost, or sometimes the whole day. The wife had pledged the husband's credit wherever she could, and all the little shops in the neighbour-

hood, down to the cellar where potherbs were sold, had occasion to bear her in remembrance. She is since dead, the husband has the eldest daughter keeping house for him, and the daughter has given birth, not long since, to a child, *said to be by her own father!* And further, in the same house where this degraded wretch now lives, may be found a brother who is said to cohabit with his own sister.

At No. 3 resided a mechanic. He was a good workman, very expert at his business, worked "piece-work," and could earn a large sum of money in a short time. He was dirty and slovenly in his attire; his wife was the same; and the house presented a destitute appearance. The man scarcely ever went to work before Tuesday or Wednesday, at which time the earnings of the previous week would be squandered, and he was compelled to work in order that he might eat and drink; indeed, this latter seemed to be his principal support, and, as we have frequently heard him say, he "lived on suction." There was very little furniture in the house, and there appeared to be scarcely the necessaries of civilised life; pots and pans had to be borrowed to cook victuals for the family; yet this man earned more than many a hard-working shopkeeper who has to pay large rates and a double income-tax! He could, if he liked, earn from £4 to £5 per week. This house was noted for women meeting to have a smoke. The place at times was reeking with the fumes of tobacco, and one of the neighbours—a tall, clean-looking woman, who lived in the next court, and who had a beautifully clean dwelling, and *cohabited with a man who had left his lawful wife*—might be seen frequently walking about smoking a long pipe. The other smokers had a larger development of secretiveness, and enjoyed the "weed" by the fireside, where, with the assistance of the "half-gallons of fourpenny," they traduced the character of all the neighbours who would not join them, and looked upon themselves "as good as any of um, although we take our glass now and then." The proprietor of this house left the neighbourhood for Sheffield, and we lost sight of him.

These people appeared to be totally indifferent respecting the education of their children. It cost them twopence per week to send a child to school, and this sum could not at all times be raised for such purpose. They could, however, muster funds every Monday to have a tea party at one or other of the three houses, to which friends from a distance would sometimes come to join them. On these occasions there appeared no lack of meat or drink, and immediately after the arrival of each visitor *a little girl would be sent off to the grog-shop for spirits*. She would return with the bottle carefully concealed by her apron, and was thus being early trained in

habits of deceit, and accustomed to the use of ardent spirits. There was generally a great bustle to get all indications of the tea party cleared off before the time at which the husbands might be expected home—that is, supposing them to be at work—and the women separated with very loud protestations of friendship for each other. When “my man” returned from labour there was a very poor meal for him, and even for this he would have to wait until the kettle boiled—the wife telling him the while “as how Dick had been so cross there was no doing any good with him; and she was not able to get a thing done this afternoon.” In some instances we have known “a little sup” to be saved for the husband, and this atoned for all the neglect; but more frequently the man saw his wife’s condition, did not feel disposed to quarrel with or abuse her, and, therefore, lighting his short pipe, he left the house, and found solace in the well-lighted room and comfortable fire at the jerry-shop, where he could get “tick.”

The fourth house was inhabited by a young man and his wife, who had the appearance of being recently married, and this was their first house. It presented to the most casual observer a striking contrast to the other three. The window, with a neat muslin blind attached, was clean; the steps were daily scoured; the centre of the floor was covered with a carpet, and the stair in like manner. There was not much furniture, but what there was had undergone a good cleaning and polishing. The grate was well blackleaded; the fire was clear; and the hearthstone was scrupulously white. A spirit of order, comfort, and cleanliness was in everything apparent. A few books on a small shelf, under which was an arm-chair, indicated how the young man spent his leisure hours; and the ball of blue yarn and knitting-needles on the table showed how the young wife passed hers. This man earned 25s. per week, and no Saturday elapsed without some small addition being made to his household goods. His wife and himself went regularly to some place of worship on the Sabbath, and they seemed in no way to mix up with the neighbours. This man is now a master tradesman in the town. Sobriety, frugality, and earnest labour, on the part of himself and his wife, have constituted the main elements of their success.

To this court, thus inhabited, no scripture reader, town missionary, or minister ever came during many months that it was under notice. The parish doctor had to find his way there sometimes, and minister to the wants and bodily woes of sick children and parents; but the spiritual necessities of the people were totally neglected. Yet the town mission was then, as now, in what is called active operation, but none of its agents ever came here. Not far

from this place there was a house where a missionary held a weekly meeting. Being anxious to see what was the character of persons who attended these meetings, and the nature of the address they were called together to hear, we visited the house on several occasions, and have therefore been duly returned in the number of hearers. The missionary was a middle-aged man, of moderate ability. The number in attendance varied from fourteen to nineteen, and were chiefly women and children. They were in most cases of the humblest class, and many of them presented pictures of poverty and wretchedness. A few working men sometimes turned in, but these were rare exceptions. The missionary commenced the meeting by singing and prayer; he then read a portion of Scripture, and addressed the people in the way of explaining some particular passage. He appeared to have read "Jenlyn on the Atonement" carefully, and his address evinced the correctness of his memory. We heard nothing of the blessing and dignity of labour, nothing of self-reliance and manly independence, nothing which would excite or stimulate any person present to adopt habits of domestic economy, but much that the poor people could not understand. The abstractions with which he attempted to grapple were, to our mind, very much out of place, and the earnest simplicity of the gospel narrative was completely lost sight of. "Whether faith be a gift of God or a work of the Spirit" seemed to us a secondary, or, indeed, altogether an indifferent matter to these poor people. They had probably to struggle with poverty and pain, and needed consolation and encouragement to enable them to fight the "battle of life." They were exposed to trial and temptation, and needed succour and support. What would they gain in this direction from the "straw-splitting" of theological dogmas? Let the ministers who take a deep interest in the moral, social, and religious well-being of the masses see well to this; and if it be found that some poor creatures are asking for the bread of life, care should be taken in every case that they are not presented with a stone.

We found at the conclusion of these meetings that tickets for food were being eagerly sought after. It is quite possible that persons may be induced to attend meetings of this character with a single eye to the loaves and fishes, and no doubt great caution and discrimination are exercised. We hope this is so now, because, as we shall have to show, cases have come under our immediate observation where the greatest imposition, deception, and hypocrisy had been practised.

It must be borne in mind that the inhabitants of this court all

breathed a similar atmosphere, their houses were all similar in construction. They all drank the water from the red sandstone, only some of them adulterated it with other fluids. They had all ample means for maintaining themselves and their families in comparative comfort. Yet look at the contrast in their habits and home. What influences would have altered the dispositions or practices of these people?

CHAPTER XII.

WE will now transfer the reader to another district of the town, inhabited solely by the working classes. The street is comparatively modern, and contains no courts. The houses are what are termed double houses, containing front and back cellar, front and back parlour, four bedrooms, and compact yards. In almost every instance the front cellars are let off, and in these single apartments families reside. The houses let for £15 per annum, payable monthly, in some cases quarterly, according to agreement. The tenants let the cellars for 2s. per week. The street runs narrow at one end, and here there are five houses smaller than the others, which let for 4s. per week. These were inhabited by men in the employ of the landlord, with one exception; and before proceeding to the larger houses in the street, we will notice these five, and their occupants.

At the first house resided a man who was in the employ of the landlord. He was a native of the north of England, and had been at one time in affluent circumstances; misfortunes had fallen on him, and he now had to turn to work. His wages were 27s. per week. He had a wife and two children. The wife had been well educated, so far as intellectual ability is concerned, and had learned several of what are called the modern accomplishments; but of household duties she was entirely ignorant—although she could work a beautiful collar, she could neither make nor wash her husband's shirt. She could sit down apparently comfortable and read the *London Journal*, whilst her children were rolling about in a filthy state, and her house was in the utmost disorder. In addition to this, she had become addicted to drink, which made fearful havoc of her health, and in a few months her personal appearance underwent a complete transformation: from a genteel, well-behaved woman, she became a careless, bloated, hopeless drunkard. Her husband could not be called a drunkard—"he took a sup on a Saturday night," and on Sunday the bottle used sometimes to be in requisition, for the regular customers could get drink any day or hour from the

vaults at the corner of the adjoining street. But he stuck to his work, and, being fond of his children, would have stuck to his home had it been made anything like a home for him. He was also a kind husband, would make the fire before he left home in the morning, in order to save his wife trouble; and sometimes, when he came in to breakfast, he would have to prepare it himself. His house contained very good old-fashioned furniture, the use made of which we shall shew hereafter. The wife got her groceries from a small shop close by, where she had credit, and had run on a large score entirely unknown to her husband. She sank deeper in debt week by week, because the gin-bottle must be filled; and the wages were by such means mortgaged. When the supplies were stopped at the shop; when the coalman would give no more, and the potato dealer was pressing; when "the Scotchman" threatened to tell her husband, and the collector hinted that the landlord, her husband's employer, would have to be informed—when, in short, she found herself completely run to earth, her husband would be informed of his position; a row would result, and a *loan* would be resorted to.

In order to obtain a loan, sureties were necessary. At the next door dwelt an Irishman, who was in the same employ; he had a wife and one child, a son. He was said to be "a downright hard-working fellow when he was at it," but he spent a considerable more time in drinking than he did in working, and would go on the spree for "a fortnight at a spell," would beat his wife, turn her and the boy out of doors, and pawn everything he could carry out of the house for drink—proving the truth of what was said of him, how hard he worked when he was at it. He was on excellent terms with the people at No. 1, and therefore was fixed on as surety for the loan. But his house was a miserable dwelling; there was hardly a chair to sit on; it did not contain altogether furniture that would amount to one pound; how, therefore, could he put on an appearance to become security for his friend? This was easily arranged. When the inspector of the loan society was expected to call, the principal articles of furniture would be moved out of No. 1 into No. 2. An eight-day clock, a good sofa, a few nice chairs, and a picture or two made the house look quite smart, and when the officer of the loan society, who was said to be a lay preacher, called, all appeared satisfactory. Another surety was got up in a similar way; the loan was obtained, and the money soon squandered. This furniture we have seen carried out to other houses in the same neighbourhood for similar purposes, a small commission being obtained for its use. The wants created and the woes inflicted amongst the working classes by the existence of loan societies, particularly those granting

loans from £2 to £5, far surpass anything that can be imagined or described; yet it is found that the principal supporters and directors of what the late Mr. Rushton called "abominable pests" are members of that section of the Christian Church whose rules entirely condemn all usury, and the venerable founder of which body considered it necessary to pass such a rule as this—"Not to pawn anything, not even to save life." What effect can follow the preaching of that man on the Sabbath, who during six days is occupied by what are called "the duties of inspector"? *The society yields 10 per cent., and occasionally large bonuses!* Such is one phase of modern Christianity. When a loan was received, a good spree immediately followed, and then the whole neighbourhood were informed how the loan was got, and what was the character of all persons engaged in procuring it. The drink did this; if nothing more, it made people very candid, and they told each other in the plainest language the trickery that was practised.

At No. 3 a workman resided who had a large family. His wages were 24s. per week. His wife was an industrious, tidy woman, continually scouring her house, driving the children off her front steps, and "warming" her own children for going in the dirt. She had a lodger, who paid 2s. 6d. per week for washing and lodging; this helped her rent, and she bustled away and battled with the rise in provisions and "the bothering taxes" like a thorough English working man's wife. Her husband was a simple-hearted, hard-working fellow; he knew little of anything save his work, and cared for little else. He took a glass or two of ale when he went to "the club"—that was all; no one ever saw him the worse for liquor. On Sunday he would take his children for a walk in the fields, and occasionally take himself to church, where he slept very comfortably.

The other two houses were occupied by young mechanics and their wives; they kept themselves very respectable, and their wives vied with each other in keeping their houses smart-looking and clean. They mixed little with the neighbours, rarely or never were seen lolling at the doors, turned out to some place of worship on the Sabbath, and lived in comparative comfort and happiness, their wages being respectively 25s. and 24s. per week. One of them joined a building society; the other put a small sum weekly or monthly, as he could best spare it, into the Bold-street bank. Again we ask, was it the construction of these dwellings, which were all precisely alike—was it the ventilation, was it any atmospheric effect, or was it the use of the water from the red sandstone, that produced the remarkable difference in the inmates of these cottages?

Had any of these things at all to do with making "the man a better mechanic, or the mechanic a better man?"

When these houses had been occupied about nine months, the whole of the tenants were summoned for poor-rates. They all objected to pay, on the ground that they understood the rates were to be included in the 4s. weekly. This would not satisfy the collector or assist to keep the poor, so to the parish office they must all go and appeal. The men who earned the largest wages sent their wives, who, covered as they were with filthy rags, presented an appearance of abject poverty; and having told a pitiful tale, in which there was no particle of truth, they escaped the tax. One of the young men appeared in person. He was asked why he refused to pay. He stated his objection, and gave further reasons which ought to have weighed with the oracle that presided. The collector of rates, being in the room, was asked, "What sort of a house is ---'s?" "A very clean, respectable house, sir, and he has a sitting at church," was the reply. This settled the matter. The fact of the man being respectable, and having so much moral honesty and respect for religion as to occupy a sitting in church and pay for it, caused this justice to decide at once that the man must pay the rates in full. It was in vain he told what he had done or what he was doing for his family out of his limited income; it was in vain that the man denied himself many comforts in order to keep himself independent and decent. He was a striving, hard-working, sober man, had a seat in church, therefore must pay the penalty for his uprightness; whilst the drunkards and their degraded wives escaped "scot free," and the same night had a "*good fuddle on the strength of it.*" This is no isolated case. Any appeal day will furnish facts as pregnant as these to all who are considering how they best can elevate or improve the condition of the labouring classes.

What is the condition of these people now? No. 1 is in London, and when last seen was in a destitute condition. He had to escape from here in consequence of becoming so involved with loans. One loan was obtained to pay another, and ruin was the result. His wife sold things out of the house little by little, and resorted to even worse means for the purpose of obtaining drink, and they are both now habitual drunkards, and thoroughly degraded. No. 2 has become what his wife calls "a downright wastrel." He works very little—not at all if he can avoid it—and was seen, a week or two since, in a tattered condition, stopping an old acquaintance and asking for "the price of a gill." The wife is supported by the son, who has proved a steady, industrious fellow, and the father is not

allowed to come near them. No. 3 is in business for himself, and was noticed last week going up a ladder to look after some of his men, whilst the master he worked for when we first knew him is just now taking the benefit of the act. No. 4 is in Dublin, and doing well; and No. 5 is here, in good circumstances, and fast becoming a wealthy man.

We will now go down the street and notice the inmates of these "double houses." Take the first, that next the huxter's shop. Here lived a man who was employed by the dock trust. He had a wife, but no family, and a niece of his wife's resided with them; she was married to a steward in one of the ocean steamers. The cellar was let off to a shoemaker, who had a wife and six children. The proprietor of the house had 21s. per week wages; the niece paid very good rent for the rooms she occupied; there was, in addition, the rent of the cellar; and *yet this man paid no poor-rates*. The inmates of the house could turn out in silks and satins when they liked, and the wife could at other times turn into the parish office clothed in rags to appeal against the rates. Out of this large street there were only four persons whose names were on the burgess roll, and these four earned less money than any other persons in the street. But it may be said the collectors ought to see to matters of this sort. If all collectors be like the collector of this district, it is utterly impossible for them to see what is the condition of the people, inasmuch as he rarely or never called on them. He sent a man round with the bills, and if he called at all it appeared to be done as a favour; that was all that was ever seen of the collector in this street. Yet he must have been very industrious *somewhere*, for his salary was raised—and this could not have been done unless he deserved it.

Next door to the house first alluded to dwelt a smith. He had a wife and four children. He was in a constant situation, received 26s. per week, but his wife was compelled to take in washing to support her family. The man had "a canine fancy," kept a good dog, which he seemed to take a great pride in, for he always took it out with him in his leisure hours. His wife was rarely seen without a bruised face or a black eye, and his children appeared to dread the sight of their father. The man was a cowardly scoundrel, and a great drunkard, whilst his wife was a mild, patient, hard-working, sober, clean woman: she scarcely ever received a penny of the fellow's wages. When he was on the spree he would sometimes come home for cash, bringing with him some companions who all had dogs, and if the money was not immediately forthcoming which he required to gratify his vicious taste, he would take the clean

clothes from the line, or from the table, *and throw them in the gutter for spite*. The poor woman was so reduced by want and ill-usage at st, that she resolved on taking her husband before the magistrates. He was committed for several months, but came out and was almost as bad as ever. He still visits "The Canine Tavern," keeps his dog, and runs it on Sunday morning; is as ready as ever to "back his fancy for all he is worth;" and his wife now presents a miserable picture of destitution and abuse. *This man never paid any rates*. His house, when his wife was able to stir about, was always kept particularly clean; therefore, so far as this was concerned, there was nothing to drive the fellow to such a vicious course of life.

At the next house resided a mechanic who earned 28s. a-week. He had a wife and child. He turned out respectable, attended a Sunday school in the district, and taught at a ragged school three evenings in each week. He was rated for the support of the poor, paid his rates, and was on the burgess roll, as, we are glad to notice, he is still. The cellar of this house was let off to a mason, in the employ of a large firm, who had a wife and two children; his wages were 27s. per week, and out of this he could scarcely obtain clothes for himself, wife, or children, and he seldom paid any rent. It is a mournful fact, but this man represents a vast number of the operative classes. His wife and the youngest child would sometimes go to meet him on Saturday night when he had obtained his wages, and it would be ten and sometimes eleven o'clock before they reached home. There would be so many places to call at, so many friends with whom they must "have two penn'orth for luck," and then they had the marketing to do, which was with them a great matter. The eldest child would be in the house of a neighbour, or a neighbour's child would be in the cellar minding it, until such time as the parents came home—"muddled," as they generally did. Some "toffee" would be brought home for the child; it would then be put to bed unwashed, and the father and mother would set to work preparing their supper. The man would go to the beer-house to pay his week's shot and get a quart of ale for supper, whilst the wife would run about the neighbourhood to borrow a pan to cook the beef-steak! These people spent as much money on their Saturday night's supper as would have obtained for them a comfortable dinner for every day in the week. Saturday night and Sunday were by them devoted entirely to eating and drinking. If any are sceptical as to these practices of the operative class, let them visit their houses, or pass through the streets where they reside, any Saturday evening from ten to twelve o'clock, when the fragrance of beef-steak and onions, roast goose, or the like, will set them at rest on the

point. The wife could not be called a drunkard, but she was thriftless and idle. She never washed her clothes until Friday or Saturday, and then she would hang the few rags out on the front railings, much to the annoyance of the landlady of the house, who considered it bad enough of them to pay no rent, but to hang such wretched clothes at the door was much worse. The husband is now dead, having killed himself with drinking, and his wife was last seen in a cellar in Frederick-street—a damp, filthy hole, not fit for human habitation. Can it be possible that the cellars in this street are under the cognizance of the Health Committee?

In one of the cellars in this street, a labourer, an elderly man and his wife, resided. The man earned 14s. per week when fully employed, but his work was irregular. The wife was always tidy; the cellar was always clean; and what clothes these people had on were plain and comfortable. This man's mode of living may be best described in his own words—and let it be noticed also that he was altogether uneducated, could neither read nor write, but went for months to a free evening school, and thus became able to do both. During our acquaintance with him, speaking of his mode of life, he said, "The way of it is, I never spend all I get, be it little or much, and I never spend anything at all in drink. I can labour as hard as any man of my age, and I believe a bit of bread and cheese will do me as much good as a glass of ale. I am not a teetotaller, I don't like them, for they are always talking about it; but I don't drink anything, as I can't see any good in it. When other people, in winter time, are going begging for tickets for soup or bread, we can sit by the fire and boil our own pot, and be independent." This man wished to be so thoroughly independent, that he pressed the young man who had taught him "to read and write and do accounts" to accept of some gratuity for his trouble, and when this was declined he found out where his benefactor lived, and whenever there happened to be a fall of snow the old fellow was sure to be at the house early in the morning to clean the snow from the door steps and front of the house. It is cheering to meet with such traits as this in the life of a labourer. Yet this man lived in a cellar, and now lives in a room, and his wages, when fully employed, are only 14s. per week.

This district was under the pastoral care of a minister of the Established Church, a young man of active habits, generous disposition, and pleasing manners. He devoted four hours each day to visiting the poor, and during the inclement season of the year his distribution of gifts was not confined to class or creed, but whenever he saw what he believed to be want or woe, his hand was stretched

out to relieve the necessities of the people. His church being what is called "a respectable church" (as if in the matter of religion these distinctions avail anything), few poor attended, and, indeed, there was little provision for them until the young minister obtained it. He availed himself of large collections made at the church, and distributed food and clothing with no niggardly hand. His first question on visiting a house was not, "What place of worship do you go to?" or "What religion are you?" but, after apologising for intruding on the privacy of a poor man's family, he would ask if they needed any assistance, what earnings were coming in, and then consider what he should do for them. He was often deceived. The people soon found out what a kind, generous nature he had, and were ready enough to impose upon him. We have known this pastor to carry blankets into the cellar where the shoemaker and his family resided, and give them to the wife in order that the children might be made comfortable at night, and the sound of the good man's foot had scarcely left the street before *one of the children was sent to the pawn-shop with these blankets*, and the money obtained on them would be consumed in *gin*! The minister's confidence in anything he heard from the people became much weakened, and thus, by the conduct of the deceitful and lying people, the necessitous poor may eventually have suffered. Yet, long as this young man remained here, he devoted himself very fully in endeavouring to supply the temporal and spiritual necessities of the people, and his labour was not altogether in vain. He held a weekly meeting in the school-room for the poor people who could not come to church. Here it was that hypocrisy was fostered. *Women would keep sober on the day of the lecture*, and present themselves—perhaps one or two children with them. The children would be shoeless, and their parents wretchedly clad. The sympathies of the minister would be excited, and a ticket for food would be given: and even loaves or groceries obtained in this way *we have known to be sold for drink*. In addition to what the church provided for such an extensive district, the Wesleyan body held a prayer-meeting in this street on Sunday evening from eight to nine o'clock, a young woman distributed tracts every Sunday afternoon, and occasionally, on fine Sundays, a party of young men would address an assemblage in the open air, "on the necessity of a new birth." The audience was frequently more select than numerous. There were two jerry-shops in the street, and two more in a street adjoining, together with three spirit-vaults, two brothels, and a pawn-shop, within a stone's throw of each other: but the church or chapel was a good way off, and the town missionary and scripture reader were engaged in other more destitute districts.

CHAPTER XIII.

STILL continuing our glimpses at life as it surrounds us, we turn now to a comparatively modern district of the town. In this only three courts are found. The streets, all formed within a few years, are well laid out; the houses are chiefly what are termed "two-story cottages;" and in point of convenience, comfort, ventilation, and appearance, they will bear comparison with any in the surrounding districts. The population is large, and consists almost entirely of the labouring classes. The rents of the houses vary from 3s. to 6s. per week, and in some cases are so arranged as to include all rates. The church provides for the people two curates, two scripture readers, what has been called "a devoted band" of district visitors, and day and Sunday schools. The Dissenters are here very active, and they provide day and Sunday schools, tract distributors, and Sunday and week-day services; and the Town Mission has an agent who devotes a considerable portion of his time to this locality. Taking it for granted that these agencies are calculated to promote or perform the work of social and moral regeneration in such a manner and to such an extent as many good men believe, we may expect to find in a district so well provided for and watched over very important results, in support of the views frequently advanced on behalf of these "philanthropic efforts." We ought, however, further to state, that amongst the important influences brought to bear on the moral and social life of the people, here are ten beer-houses, five spirit-vaults, two skittle-alleys, and one pawn-shop.

There is here one street of cottages which is looked upon by all who understand the wants, wishes, and requirements of working men as models of neatness and convenience, combined with a cheap rent, a good supply of water, and abundance of good air. They contain four apartments—a front living room, a back kitchen, with sink-stone, boiler for washing, and all conveniences; a good yard capable of storing a couple of tons of coal; and upstairs are two good bed-rooms. The rent, which includes all rates, is 3s. 10d. per week. They were built by a man who had "risen from the ranks." When he earned 24s. per week as journeyman, *he lived on 10s., and saved the balance.* He well knew the value of money, and also had experienced the value of a comfortable home. He made no pretensions to philanthropy in the building of these cottages, but built them with the object of making them "pay." At the same time he gave, at a very moderate cost, a comfortable compact home to the working man; and we have not seen either in this or other

towns any thing at all to compare with these cottages, either as regards character or cost. Such are the houses. What or who are the inhabitants?

In one dwells a man who is in constant employment, at 30s. per week. He has a wife and three children. The husband has not lost a day's work for many years—is a sober, industrious man; yet he is poor, and his children are ill clothed. The house evinces the husband's taste in decoration, and his wife's neglect in point of cleanliness. She is not a drunkard, yet the earnings of the husband are squandered, and his hard labour lost. Everything is got on credit—the groceries, the vegetables, coals; clothes from "Scotchmen;" and sometimes money is borrowed "to make the week out," and, as the woman says, "the wages are all eaten up before she gets them;" yet will she persist in her ruinous course; and all this, to a great extent, is carried on unknown to the husband. The district visitor will inquire kindly after the children when she calls, and will exchange the tract, and hope to see both husband and wife at church, but they rarely or never go. The man "does not believe in the Church." He thinks "chapels are all alike," and religion "all a sham." When he gets a new suit of clothes he intends to go to church and chapel too, to show them. His wife has more respect for religion and its teachers, but in her present embarrassed state how can she think of anything but the present life and its wants and woes? What might the town missionary do when he meets with such a case?

Next door dwells a man who holds a good situation at 28s. per week. He has a wife and two children, and is professedly a Churchman—indeed, a testimonial from a minister was required before he obtained his present situation. He is said to be in the possession of sound Protestant principles; is a member of a lodge, and on the anniversary day walks in procession, decorated with party-coloured ribbons. His wife and children, with many more like them, bring up the rear of the display in spring carts. These sound Protestants are now compelled to confine their display to the rural districts; and, fearing lest they should not have an opportunity of displaying their principles, they have on recent occasions taken with them a cart filled with barrels of ale, and their close and unremitting attention to that part of their duty has been the subject of general remark. There is a skittle-alley close by the houses now under notice, and here this man's evenings are generally spent. As to reading, or spending his leisure hours with his family, these seem to form no portion of his religion, therefore he never practises such things; but he can appreciate fully a running-match or a rabbit-race,

on Sunday morning, and if a pugilistic encounter should result from the former, which is frequently the case, it seems not in any way to clash with his principles. His wife is an industrious woman, and has to take in washing to help to support the family; but there seems a lack of true independence about the people. They will take advantage of "the clothing fund" at the church, receive anything that is offered to the poor during an inclement season, and *a spirit of mendicancy is gradually being cultivated by them*, than which nothing exerts a more baneful influence on the social standing of the people. Here is a man with ample means to preserve himself and family in comfort and independence, and a rightly-balanced mind would scorn to accept of that which, by his own industry and frugality, he might earn and enjoy. The cases of this description, met with in this and other districts of the town, cause one to blush for the moral training the people receive, and if rigidly inquired into and reported would shame ministers and teachers into something like practical usefulness—unless, indeed, as many suppose, teaching and preaching have become moth-eaten with the sordid views and worldly feelings which are said too frequently to characterise the modern professors of religion.

As a contrast to the foregoing, there is in this street a man engaged in out-door employment, whose wages are 27s. per week; but in bad weather he loses a deal of time, which limits his income considerably. He has a wife and three children; neither he nor his wife is a strong person, and for a long time the wife has been in a bad state of health. Their house is the picture of comfort and cleanliness: the children are neatly clothed; the parents have a seat at church, and contribute a little to the various funds for religious or philanthropic purposes. The home training of the children is very carefully attended to—which, after all, is the main point in education, and the parents even now reap the reward of their labour, in the obedience and good behaviour of their children. There are no clothing-fund tickets taken in this house; indeed, the district visitors rarely think of speaking on the subject *where they find a house clean and the people comfortable*. In winter time we have known this house, with its cleanliness, to be the abode of poverty, but it was not abject. The people bore their sorrows without a murmur; and if the good nature or kind offices of friendship brought them any relief, oh, how feelingly was it accepted, and how fully and faithfully returned. This man has not spent a penny in intoxicating drink for fourteen years; and to see him and his family on their way to church causes one ardently to long for the "good time coming," when multitudes of working men will be like him.

A case has come under our notice during the last few weeks which reveals social evils of such a nature as to call for special attention. In a room 8 feet by 9 (not in the street of which we have been speaking) dwell a working man, his wife, and two children. They have nothing but this room for living and sleeping. There is no bed in the place, but a bundle of shavings and straw thrown on the floor answers the purpose. Two of this man's children died of fever a short time since, and the two remaining present a very unhealthy appearance, *The man is in constant employment, earns good wages, and the wife goes out washing and charing.* Both parents are drunkards, and neither themselves nor children have any change of clothing. To use the man's own words—"We have a good blow-out on Saturday night and Sunday, and then we put the screw on," which, being interpreted, means they eat and drink almost the whole of the week's earnings on Saturday night and Sunday, and have in consequence to starve themselves and children the remaining days. There are several washerwomen in the neighbourhood, and this woman works for some of them occasionally. She also resorts to a scheme for raising money during the week which we understand is becoming very common; and fraught as it is with the greatest dangers, the public cannot be made acquainted with it too soon. It is called "*borrowing a pledge.*" She will go to some of the washerwomen, who, for a consideration, lend her some dirty clothes. These she takes to her pestilential home, and washes as the convenience there will best admit. They are hurriedly dried, ironed, or mangled, and taken to the pawn-shop, where she is well known. The money received on these enables herself and husband to drink and eat until Saturday night, when with his wages she releases the clothes, and takes them from the pawn-shop to the washerwoman who has so kindly lent them. They are placed in the basket and taken home, and, as the woman says, "what harm is done to the owner of the togs, and what if his name was read at the pawn-shop?" Last week, we know, three shirts and a pair of light trowsers were pledged for 4s., and for several weeks past this woman has obtained clothes by such means, on which she had procured sums varying from 8s. to 12s. The pawnbrokers must be aware that the pledges offered are not the woman's own property, and why not check the evil?

Passing now into one of the courts, we find four houses, which, although not old, appear in a dilapidated condition. In one resides a mechanic, who earns 28s. per week regularly, and has a wife and three children. The woman and children are in a filthy state, and the house as wretched as the inmates are degraded. This man

never enters a place of worship, and boasts that he has only been once in church since he was christened, and that was to get married. He does not lose any time from work for purposes of drunkenness, yet he consumes an enormous quantity of ale. He will frequently drink two gallons of ale on Sunday morning before his breakfast, sleep that off, eat as much food as ought to serve him a couple of days, and then set to work drinking again. His wife has no knowledge of household affairs, having served her time to a trade. She understands that, and nothing more. This leads to domestic broils, which often result in blows, but the wife has in this respect clearly the best of it. She is of an ungovernable temper, and highly combative. On one occasion she, with a child in her arms, was passing a neighbourhood where they used to reside, when the keeper of a little shop stopped her and asked for the settlement of a small account. Some words ensued; she passed her infant to a companion to hold, then, throwing off her shawl, and turning up her sleeves, she proceeded, in true British style, to settle the account, by giving the creditor what she calls "a good belting." And so with differences at home. They are settled in like manner: on one occasion recently *she tore the front out of her husband's shirt whilst they sat at meat*, merely because he questioned her qualifications as cook, and threw the pudding against the wall. These people never dwell long in one place. The weekly wages do little more than keep them in drink, and for food they "get trust in the shops about," and for clothes "get all from the Scotchman." When they are pretty deep in everybody's books about, they are said to have "sold the plant," and therefore look out for another residence, adopt the same plan here, and move off again. The man amuses his companions and shopmates by telling of the tricks he and his wife resort to in order to cheat people out of food and clothing, and relates with great glee a story showing how he is training his children to habits of lying and all manner of deceit and hypocrisy. This man and his family have lived in all districts of the town, and in all kinds of houses; yet neither air nor habitation seems to have in any way improved his character, which would lead some people to think that all real improvement, mental, moral, or social, must proceed *from within a man*, and is not dependent on external circumstances to any great extent.

One of the Scripture readers in this district holds meetings at some of the houses, where the poor and infirm, or those who may be otherwise prevented from attending the church, have an opportunity of hearing the Scriptures read and explained. He goes round and informs the people of the time of meeting, and invites attendance;

but his other duties must be of an extraordinary or harassing nature, for on several occasions, after calling the people together, *he has forgotten or neglected to come himself*. On a very recent occasion, a number of poor people waited at the appointed house *two hours*, and he never appeared. On another day he kept them waiting an hour and a half, and then appeared to lament his being so much behind time, but it had in the multiplicity of his other engagements quite escaped his memory.* The recent report of the Scripture Readers' Society laments the fact that they have not the means to employ more labourers. The fact of a man being worked so hard that he forgets what his duty really is, shows the necessity that exists for *other labourers* being appointed, in order that such men may be relieved. Without wishing in any way to undervalue the service which these men render or the good they accomplish, we doubt the policy of spending large sums of money for such purpose, unless a foundation is laid upon which a superstructure of religious teaching may be judiciously and permanently built.

"House-to-house visitation" is highly spoken of in some districts where it is practised. Whether anything of the sort prevails here we are not in a position to state; but this much is known. At a house within a stone's throw of the church resides an old woman, who "has been brought up to the church," as it is termed, and who had a near relative who filled a pastoral office in a rural district. This old person is now infirm, and cannot get to church. The minister of the district was written to respecting her case, and the result is, that the curates have visited her *three times in seven years*! It is true her children attend to her, and in a pecuniary or physical view she wants for nothing; but she is one of those people who for very many years of her life was in the habit of seeing and conversing with "the parson." She also likes this intercourse, and believes it does her good. When she resided in the country, and the parson had sometimes a great distance to come, where there was neither district visitor nor Scripture reader, the spiritual consolation which she derived from the pastor's visit was regularly obtained. But now, with the shadow of almost a century upon her—with a body enfeebled, and yet the mind comparatively vigorous, tottering under the weight of years—she has to travel the remaining portion of her journey unheeded, uncared for, so far as these ministers and teachers are concerned—this, too, in a district which, within the last month, has been held up before a large, influential, and wealthy congregation as "a model district."

It was our intention to notice at some length the effort which

* It is right to state that the person alluded to is not employed by the Church of England Scripture Readers' Society, but is supported from a separate fund.

has been made by a body of gentlemen in this town to construct model houses for the operative classes. The subject has, however, been entered upon by other hands, and we therefore leave it to them, contenting ourselves by saying that, however much the mode may be questioned, the object and motive are worthy of all praise. The houses erected in Frederick-street, and called the Albert Cottages, are neat and cheerful in appearance. Those erected in Northumberland-street, by "The Liverpool Labourers' Dwelling Company," cannot be considered either neat or cheerful in appearance, whatever be the conveniences they contain. Beyond this, the rents are, in the main, too high for a labouring man to pay. A man with a wife and five or six children, whose wages weekly are 26s. or 28s., cannot feed and clothe his family and pay rent of 5s. or 6s. per week. Whilst visiting these houses we met with a man and his wife who were looking out for a house, and having heard of these they had come to look at them. It would have done the committee of this company and all concerned great good to hear the criticism of this working man and his wife on the appearance and construction of these model houses. The man had read that an Englishman's house was his castle, and he liked to consider it such, and thought it ought not to be made to appear quite the reverse. The woman had notions of cleanliness and privacy which she could not reconcile with the construction of these dwellings, or the regulations drawn up by the committee for the guidance of the tenants. That the company are actuated by the best and purest motives, the names of several gentlemen on the committee abundantly testify; but there is a practical man wanted amongst them. If people are to be drawn from the foul and filthy courts into which they now crowd—and it is desirable in every way, morally, socially, and physically, that they should be—houses should be so constructed that the rents would fall within the means of these poor people, or how can they be expected to avail themselves of the desirable change? There are some of the houses in Northumberland-street at a rental of 3s. 9d. This for a comfortable house is moderate. But any man, more particularly an Englishman, who can pay 6s. per week, will locate himself in a neat cottage house, where he can have that independent action and domestic privacy which, to some extent, cannot be obtained in large blocks of dwellings with a common entrance. The company having started the work, and public attention being now directed to it, we may expect in this as in other cases that publicity will be the true cure of social evils, and that whatever defects are discovered in the construction or arrangement of these dwellings will be remedied, when this or another company erects another block of model houses for the working classes.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE views advanced, and the illustrations given in support of those views, during the consideration of the social condition of the people, as exhibited in their homes, have provoked discussion. This was desired, and, if it could be maintained in a spirit becoming the object and aim of these papers, was in every way desirable. Men whose position and prospects are materially affected by upholding any system of money-making or money-getting are sure to cry out and endeavour to excite alarm (feeling they need expect but little sympathy) if they see, or imagine they see, "their system" to be in danger. Should they be religious professors, who have given largely of their substance "for the good of the cause"—"noble Bereans," who read the Scriptures daily, and are entrusted with the scriptural instruction of the rising generation—they will be enabled to show that their conduct had a parallel in the infancy of the Christian church, and that human nature is now just what it was in the apostolic age. Their position may be illustrated by "the rat biting the file." With such men it has ever been found wise to act on the principle inculcated by the old proverb—let them have space and a good supply of hempen cord, and to all intents and purposes their end is clear. Disinterested and sensible men may mourn over the folly and lament the inconsistency, but they will entirely forgive the unjust, ungenerous, and malicious motives which these usurious Christians so readily impute to the actions of all with whom they cannot agree.

In the course of these papers we have written nothing but what we have witnessed. Every case given, every family alluded to, has been personally seen by us, and every statement made is true, can be abundantly proved, and we challenge any man to prove the contrary. It may answer the purpose of some to try and persuade others that a fictitious case has been given. We have no object to serve but one—to state facts without fear or favour, and there is no motive but one that ever induced us to commence the work or cheered us in its prosecution. We have never applied to any loan society for assistance, and feel thankful we never did; *but we have been repeatedly applied to, by local preachers, Sunday-school superintendents and teachers, to invest our savings in these associations, but have on principle refrained; this, too, notwithstanding the offers of a large return for our money. Indeed, but a few days ago a shareholder said, "We are not allowed by law to give more than 10 per cent., but we make it up to a good deal more by bonuses."*

Having stated this, we trust our Wesleyan friends will, for their own sakes, refrain from breaking the moral law with reference to our aim and object, and our views "on loan societies, their supporters and conductors," shall take a more permanent shape than the columns of a newspaper.

The space allotted for the completion of the second series of "Liverpool Life" is now almost exhausted, and it remains for us to take a retrospective glance at the phases which we have attempted to show. It was believed by many good, earnest, true-hearted men that an exposure—a truthful, and, if needs be, in order to secure this, a revolting exposure—of the social evils which cast such a blight upon our modern civilisation, and which are seen in the pleasures, practices, and pastimes of the people, would be productive of good. As the true knowledge of a disease most frequently suggests the remedy, so it was considered, could we see truly what social life amongst us is, what it should be might be more easily pointed out. This exposure has in part been given. We say in part, because there are yet many abominable and degrading practices which have not been noticed. But enough has been shown to excite the social reformer to increased exertions, to stimulate the philanthropist to more enlarged efforts, and to urge on Christian ministers and well-disposed and thinking men caution and greater discrimination in the disposal of the vast sums of money actually and annually dispensed, professedly for the moral, social, and religious improvement of the people. With all the agencies that the active benevolence of our townsmen have organised and set in motion; with all the good which, on many hands, we see daily done; with all the sympathy manifested and expressed for the moral regeneration of the people; with all our educational schemes, missionary enterprises, and temperance leagues, it is found, and has been shown, that we are nevertheless surrounded by social evils of such a magnitude, of such a vicious and degrading tendency, as to lead all but hopeful spirits to despondency, if not to despair. True, there are gleams of sunshine on the path of progress still; and, therefore, in the cheering words of Longfellow, let us "Look not mournfully into the past; it comes not back again. Wisely improve the present; it is thine. Go forth to meet the shadowy future without fear, and with a manly heart."

The papers in this and the former series, descriptive of the amusements and pastimes of the people, as seen in operation daily and nightly amongst us, carry with them their own moral. Little can be expected in the way of improvement in this direction so long as we see the authorities so lax in the administration of the law. From the report of Major Greig, recently presented to the Watch

Committee, we find that there are in Liverpool 1,445 licensed public houses; of these 66 are reported, and therefore known to be irregularly conducted, and 80 of them are *licensed for gambling*. There are 896 beer-houses, 122 of these are known to be irregularly conducted, and 17 of them are *licensed for gambling*. There are 195 coffee-houses, 33 of which are known to be irregularly conducted. There are 714 brothels, and 193 houses of accommodation and lodging-houses for prostitutes. These houses cast on the streets a flood of iniquity, namely, 2318 prostitutes, being an increase over the year 1855 of 123. Such is the polluted stream that is ever flowing, and on the increase; and what is done to check its progress or purify its character?

As to the beer-houses, it is well known that they are in many cases houses of accommodation, and in them thieves and prostitutes are harboured, in consideration of the custom that they bring. They are in other cases supported almost entirely by youths, who here learn to drink, smoke, and play cards, and thus qualify themselves for the higher and more fashionable schools of vice. We have counted in one room in a beer-house 23 boys, not one of whom was above 16 years of age; they "tossed" for quarts of ale, and sang the most indecent songs, and thus prepared themselves for the Sabbath. The police *know* of the most abominable scenes which frequently take place in these houses, and yet what do we see done, even by way of an attempt to abolish the iniquity?

As to singing saloons for the upper, middle, and lower classes—for they are specially set apart for all these grades—they are, *wherever drink is introduced*, degrading in tendency, and productive of evil results. Even in what are called the most respectable, when the evening is far advanced, and drink has numbed the feelings and abolished shame, obscenity is introduced in the most subtle guise, the poison is very gently and for a time imperceptibly instilled, and the young gentleman leaves the saloon with a vicious thought, which ere long results in a degrading action. The instances we have given of singing saloons are fair samples of the class.

But what shall we say of those places whose business only begins when other licensed houses are supposed by law to close? When the casino, the singing saloon, the prostitutes' promenade, the beer-shop, the gambling-house, the spirit-vaults—when these have done their work, then the portals of the *salle de danse* are opened, and thronged with eager and drink-maddened pleasure-seekers; and this is permitted nightly to go on, whilst the police court and the prison almost weekly declare its frightful tendency. Talk of our active magistracy, of our earnest and devoted ministry! In what direction

are the former active? In what sense are the latter earnest and devoted? Some of our magistrates are known as philanthropists, others are known as religious men of sound evangelical principles; and what have these done—what effort have they ever made to carry out in these matters the true spirit of the law? This may be gleaned from the following:—

At a Special Court, held on Thursday, for the removal and transfer of licences, John Wickham applied to have the licence of a house in Lime-street transferred from John Lawrie, sen., to himself. In reply to Mr. Wybergh, the applicant admitted that he had previously occupied a house in the name of John Harrison, but he was then a betting man, and he had now given that up.—Mr. Alderman Holme: Then the fact is, I suppose, you formerly kept a betting-house in the name of Harrison, and you now want us to transfer a house to you in the name of Wickham? The Applicant: Yes, my name is John Harrison Wickham, and I am known by that name to all my tradesmen. I have entirely given up betting now, I have lost 5,000 sovereigns by it, so I thought it was time to give up.—The application was then complied with, Mr. Alderman Holme cautioning Wickham that if he still continued betting the licence might not be renewed.

Here is a man who has failed to succeed in an illegal pursuit, and comes before the bench and candidly declares it, and this declaration is considered a sufficient ground for granting a licence for a house, and this in a street, too, in which, as declared a short time ago by the magistrate who granted the license, that the scenes nightly enacting were a disgrace to any civilised community. Do magistrates expect that a large donation to the Town Mission or Scripture Readers' Association will atone for their sins of omission in the discharge of their magisterial capacity? or do they imagine that the mission can accomplish what the magistrate lacks the nerve to do? To support the mission is good, but to lessen the necessity for its existence is better. Magistrates may do the one, but they err fearfully and incur a terrible responsibility in leaving the other undone. What has been done in Glasgow may be done here, and would be done were Christian men united, and Christian ministers true to their profession.

Then, turning to our social state, as seen in the homes of the people, what do we find? We have seen one district which was not attended to by any minister, town missionary, district visitor, or scripture reader; another that had the active attention of an exemplary minister; and a third that had the advantage of all the agencies which are in operation for the improvement of the people, and in each district we meet with cases revealing social evils that are as startling as instructive, and in all something to please, though much to appal. These cases show—what was intended to be shown—that neither education, improved dwellings, total abstinence, Sunday schools, town missionaries, or Scripture readers *alone* are

sufficient to raise the people from the depth into which they have been permitted, and in some instances assisted, to descend. The cases might have been multiplied, for no man can mingle for twenty years amongst the working population without being struck with the social anomalies that surround him. What will be said of that state of society, when a man in the receipt of 42s. weekly, and an additional income from other sources than his own labour, which defrays rent and taxes, who is not a drunkard in the usual acceptance of that term, yet is poor, ill-clothed, and, as he says, it is so long since he had any new clothes, he would almost fear to put them on, could he obtain them? His wife is a member of a Christian church, is regular in her attendance at the services, interlards all her discourse with frequent references to the Divine Being, and yet has not gone to bed sober any night for months past. The iniquities practised in this household are humiliating to reflect on; and though the *scripture reader has been in the house every day for many months, and was there every day last week*, yet he never on any occasion has alluded to the degradation and depravity which he ought to have seen in existence around him. Or take another case. One of the children alluded to in a former paper has died since that was written, and was buried last Sunday. The coffin, we were told, had been obtained from the parish, but as we did not see the coffin we cannot state positively. This we do know, that every person who attended the funeral had borrowed clothes for the purpose, and on the return to the house after the interment a pint and a half of rum was consumed in the tea, four gallons of ale had been drunk up to eight o'clock, at which time several members of the funeral party were drunk, and still it was said the funeral passed off very comfortably! Neither father, mother, nor any of the relations or friends had clothes to attend the funeral, yet they did raise money to eat and drink on such an occasion. This man is in constant employment, and his earnings are ample to maintain himself and family in comfort; but he crowds his family in a place unfit for human habitation, and shortens the lives of his offspring by his own mode of life; and these evils exist in the face of every effort yet made for the improvement of the working classes. Experience confirms us in the opinion that no agency yet in operation is calculated to do for the working classes what they ought by a proper training in early life to be taught to do for themselves. On every hand it may be seen that the crowding in courts, in rooms, or in cellars, the assembling of people in these "moral pest houses," is not in consequence of poverty, but in consequence of *that which creates poverty*—extravagant and improvident habits, idleness, and drunkenness. Of course,

there are the concomitant evils attendant on these vices; but nine-tenths of the misery, moral, social, and domestic, which surrounds us, may be traced to the sources named.

But it may be said, Why sicken us with these dreadful details—why expose the corruptions of our social state without proposing a remedy? The answer is, we undertook to show the disease, and this only. So far as we have gone in this direction our task for a time is ended. We rejoice to see the attention which on all sides is now being directed to many forms of vice which heretofore were allowed to revel on unchecked, because unknown, and take credit for having excited and stimulated public attention on these points, if nothing more. We rejoice also to notice the zealous endeavours made by many clergymen to provide rational recreation for the people. They have done well, and set an example, in every way worthy of imitation, to their dissenting brethren. The unparalleled success and beneficial effect of the Saturday Evening Concerts in Lord Nelson-street have greatly stimulated these efforts of the clergy, and it is pleasing to know that, so far from a spirit of rivalry existing, the parent institution does all it can to make its offspring healthy and independent, by setting before them a good example, and providing for the people, at the lowest possible cost, the most artistic, instructive, and amusing entertainments. Were all concert rooms conducted on the principle laid down by this and other institutions more recently established, Liverpool life would indeed present a pleasing phase. An interval of rest, and, it is to be desired, more ample leisure, will enable us to profit by, improve, and turn to account the experience of the past, when the *remedial measures* for such a state of things as we have shown to exist shall have that consideration which an interest in the well-being of the people has engendered. The manner in which the leisure hours of the past twelve months have been spent cannot be altogether in vain, and we trust to meet our readers ere long in another and more pleasing field. To all who have from time to time cheered and encouraged us in the prosecution of an unpleasant task, we tender hearty thanks; to all who have maligned, misrepresented, and in every way tried to discourage our efforts or frustrate our designs, we wish an improved way of thinking, and trust they may yet repent of their misdeeds.

[END OF THE SECOND SERIES.]



APPENDIX.

THE REV. WM. HARCUS ON "LIVERPOOL LIFE."

The Rev. W. HARCUS, of Toxteth Chapel, Liverpool, in commencing a series of lectures on "Liverpool Life" at the Elms Temperance Institute, said:—Some months ago a writer in the *Liverpool Mercury* commenced a series of papers on the same subject, which he apprehended produced the same effect upon the minds of many who read them as they had produced upon his own mind. No one could live long in this town without seeing that there was an appalling amount of vice, crime, and misery existing amongst us. Much, very much, came to the surface, which we were constrained to see in our every-day life; but he imagined there were few occupying what was called a respectable position in the town who were prepared for such a revelation as had been given by the writer to whom he had referred. They saw that vice and misery existed, but few knew how it was created. The writer of "Liverpool Life" had lifted the veil over those moral pesthouses with which our town is crowded, and had forced us to look upon what we might call manufactories of vice and crime; and the most affecting and humiliating circumstance connected with these places was the fact that they were licensed by the magistracy of the town. Let him, then, before proceeding further, as a Christian and a minister of religion, offer his grateful acknowledgments to the gentleman who had had the moral daring to speak, not in measured terms or "bated breath," but in bold, truthful words, of those frightful scenes which he had witnessed. He was amazed that there could be amongst good men a difference of opinion as to the moral tone and useful tendency of those letters. One might understand how class interest should take the alarm when the nefarious secrets of their success were dragged out to the light. There was the old cry, "Our craft is in danger." But how Christian men and moralists could hesitate for a moment to accept the great service which had been rendered to the cause that they held dear, and to accept it with gratitude, did seem strange. Now, he admitted that there was a coarseness about some of these letters

which was very repulsive to pure and sensitive minds; but it was the coarseness of vice; it was the coarseness of what the writer saw, not that which he brought to his task. Let a surgeon describe in popular terms the whole process of a *post mortem* examination, and it would be a coarse and repulsive description, from which sensitive minds would shrink, though the operator himself might be the gentlest and most amiable of men. No one would say that in such a case the coarseness, the repulsiveness were in the man, but in his subject. It was so in the question before them: a man could not handle dirty subjects with white kid gloves; a man could not truly describe filthy things with soft, delicate, and gentle words. What would have been the use of employing half allusions and remote hints in dealing with questions which ought to be known as they are? He admitted, moreover, that there might be some danger in giving publicity to certain forms of moral and social evil—that it would be difficult to lift the veil without, perhaps, in some instances, exciting a morbid curiosity which would seek its gratification in the very scenes which were held up to reprobation. But still that danger must be risked for the sake of the higher good to be obtained by letting the church-and-chapel-going people in this large town know that there was a poisonous gangrene eating into the very heart of the body social. The fact was, we had been far too squeamish and delicate in reference to the vice and crime which existed around us; we refused to call things by their proper names, or shut them out altogether from our eye, and thought, because we had covered them with the thin gauze of of a worldly propriety, that they no longer existed. We wanted more of the spirit of plain-speaking of those brave old Jewish prophets, who in their days dealt with the wickedness of their nation as men who saw it in all its enormity, and denounced it in strong plain words. It had been remarked, that in order to awaken emotion, men must look at objects in detail—a very general view would produce very little impression on the heart. A general way of talking about human depravity would leave us very much as we were. We must, then, narrow our view, and fix our eye on some of the actual forms of evil, and thus compel ourselves to look at vice and crime in detail. It might be, and to many of us would be, a very unpleasant and disgusting sight; but it must be done. The physician who got a correct diagnosis obtained the first step towards a cure. It was suggested to him, some months ago, that it might be a useful service if he were to direct special attention to some of the forms of evil which had been brought to light by the writer of “*Liverpool Life*,” in order that the good impressions pro-

duced by the letters themselves might be kept alive, and, if possible, deepened and strengthened. After considering the matter, he determined to lecture on the subject, and the good friends connected with the Temperance Society there had kindly relieved him of the trouble of making arrangements and conducting the series; and they put him forward as their advocate—a position which, though they might not be agreed on all points, he was very happy to occupy. In commencing that series of lectures, then, he felt it his duty to say that much in the way of justification of the moral purpose and useful design of the *Mercury's* letters on “Liverpool Life.” His testimony, feeble though it were, was at least honest and disinterested; he knew not a single person connected with the paper, and certainly it had never shown him any such favour as would be likely to give him an undue bias towards its side.

THE CHAPLAIN OF THE BOROUGH GAOL ON “LIVERPOOL LIFE.”

TO THE EDITORS OF THE LIVERPOOL MERCURY.

GENTLEMEN,—It was with considerable, at the same time with painful, interest, that I read the papers on “Liverpool Life,” as they lately appeared from week to week in the *Mercury*, and I am glad to find that they have been reproduced in a cheap form for still wider and more general circulation.

The position which I hold as the chaplain of the gaol makes me only too well acquainted with the sad effects which do and cannot but follow such a deplorable state of things as you have so faithfully, so truthfully, brought to light. I for one cannot but thank you for what you have done. Your revelations may be distasteful in some quarters, but I hope you will not shrink on that account from continuing to expose to view evils which are spreading over us far and wide, and which must be known in order to their correction.

Liverpool had long the reputation of being one of the most unhealthy towns in the kingdom, and I fear it is second to none in the unenviable notoriety of its immorality. Much has been done already to remove the former stain, but ministers of religion of every denomination, and philanthropists of every grade, should unite to remove the latter reproach.

I send you a list of names of gentlemen residing at a distance,

to each of whom I shall feel obliged to you to forward a copy of "Liverpool Life," charging me with the cost.

Yours, &c.

THOMAS CARTER.

Walton-on-the-Hill, Nov. 18, 1856.

MR. WILLIAM RATHBONE ON "LIVERPOOL LIFE."

TO THE AUTHOR OF "PUBLICITY THE CURE OF SOCIAL EVILS."

DEAR SIR,—I wish to think respectfully of many excellent and earnest people from whom I differ; but long, and, I am willing to hope, unbiassed desires to arrive at a knowledge of the truth have only confirmed me in the conviction that the knowledge of an evil is one step towards its remedy. I therefore heartily concur in the title of your book, that "publicity is the great cure for our social evils." I read with much pleasure, and full concurrence in its sentiments, your excellent, and to my mind, conclusive preface. Many persons, from their abhorrence of guilt, shrink from even the contamination of perusing its details. I fear some are influenced by more selfish and unworthy motives—that they shrink from a knowledge which might awaken a painful consciousness of responsibilities unredeemed, thereby inculcating them in the charge of being aiders and abettors of the crime which in words they deplore.

Allow me to mention to you an idea on which I have been dwelling for some time. It is generally admitted that drunkenness is the source of the largest proportion of crime. The innocent amusements and recreations for the poor are amongst the most important means of reformation, second only to the efforts to make their dwellings a decent and comfortable *home*, which they may feel as such after the labours of the day are over. Among the minor, though by no means unimportant, aids in this direction, my own firm conviction is, that if every gin-palace had its plate-glass windows down to the ground, the interior open to the gaze of passers-by, many a trembler on the brink of vice, awed by the publicity, would fear to commence the career of crime. Publicity is required for the sale of food: why not in the case of poison? Such a plan ought to find favour with the authorities, as it would greatly increase the efficiency of the police, and render their duties less unpopular. To the merry and wise it would be no restraint, only be dreaded by deeds of darkness which fear the light.

As the editors of the *Mercury* are well aware, it has only been a reluctance to obtrude myself on the public that has prevented me, months ago, from thanking them, as a magistrate, for devoting their columns to such pious uses.

I remain, respectfully, Sir,

Your faithful Servant,

WM. RATHBONE.

Water-street, Nov. 22, 1856.

